Hafa Adai!

Free #MarianasStrong concert this Saturday. PAGE 3
CHCC warns of increased number of flu-like illnesses. PAGE 7

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Rep. Frank Dela Cruz, 56

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Dela Cruz

Former House vice speaker Francisco S. Dela Cruz (R-Saipan) passed away suddenly yesterday while he was on Tinian. He was 56. He is survived by his wife, Lisa, and their four children.

There is no official word yet on what caused his death. A source said that Dela Cruz was being medically evacuated to Saipan when the ambulance turned from the Tinian International Airport to the Tinian Health Center. Emergency responders, at

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Man killed after being hit by car

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

A 74-year-old man was killed after being hit by a car as he was attempting to cross the notoriously dark area of the street across Joeten Dandan last Friday.

Aurelio del Prado was pronounced dead at the Commonwealth Health Center. He is known for sharing Bible verses with strangers he would meet at Joeten or Twins Supermarket and would not ask for money but was grateful when offered any sort of help.

Department of Public Safety Commissioner Robert Guerrero said the incident was not a hit-and-run, as many believed it was and

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Kilili sworn in to sixth term

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, left, administers the oath of office to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) at the Capitol on Thursday. Sablan's wife, Andrea, holds the Bible given for this purpose in 2009 by the late bishop Tomas A. Camacho.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) took his sixth oath of office on Thursday last week at noon, along with the other 440 incoming members of the 116th U.S. House of Representatives.

Sablan, who is an independent candidate but is a member of the Democratic Caucus, will be in the majority bloc again for the first time since 2011, when Republicans took

See KILILI on Page 4

Emergency medical technicians check the injuries on the shoulder of an employee of Imperial Pacific who was hit by a Toyota Sienna van while crossing a pedestrian lane on a bicycle along Chalan Pale Arnold Road in Gualo Rai Saturday morning. At right is the van's driver. Police are still investigating the incident.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Van hits bicyclist near pedestrian lane

A man on a bicycle was injured when a van hit him as he was crossing a pedestrian lane along Chalan Pale Arnold Road or Middle Road in Gualo Rai Saturday morning.

The bicyclist, a Filipino employee of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, suffered bruises on the right shoulder.

A Korean man was the driver of the van—a Toyota Sienna with license plate ACK 373. He was not injured.

When traffic officers arrived at the scene, the bicyclist was already inside the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services ambulance on the way to the Commonwealth Health Center.

There was no available infor-

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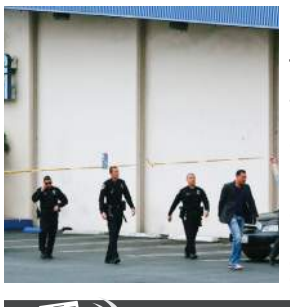

NATION
Three men were fatally shot late Friday and four injured at a popular Los Angeles-area.
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LIFE & STYLE
Kevin Hart says he'll reconsider his decision to step down as host of the Academy Awards.
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Local

Russia: Too early to consider exchange of US spy suspect

MOSCOW (AP)—Russia's deputy foreign minister brushed back suggestions Saturday that an American being held in Moscow on suspicion of spying could be exchanged for a Russian citizen.

The brother of Paul Whelan, however, tells The Associated Press that he can't help but question whether the events are indeed connected.

"You look at what's going on and you wonder if this is just a large game of pieces being moved around," David Whelan told the AP via Skype from Newmarket, Ontario. "You start to wonder if all of these things are connected. But at the same time, they could just be arbitrary events."

Paul Whelan, a former U.S. Marine who also holds Canadian, British and Irish citizenship, was detained in Moscow in late December. His arrest has led to speculation that Russia could be using him to bargain for a Russian who pleaded guilty to acting as a foreign agent in the United States.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said that discussing a possible swap involving Whelan and Maria Butina would be premature because Whelan hasn't been formally charged, according to Russian news agencies.

This undated file photo provided by the Whelan family shows Paul Whelan in Iceland. Russia's deputy foreign minister Sergei Ryabkov on Saturday Jan. 5, 2019, is brushing back suggestions that an American being held in Moscow on suspicion of spying could be exchanged for a Russian. Paul Whelan, who also holds Canadian, British and Irish citizenship was detained in late December.

COURTESY OF THE WHELAN FAMILY VIA AP

"As to the possibility of exchanges of one sort of another, it's impossible and incorrect to consider the question now when an official charge hasn't even been presented," Ryabkov was quoted as saying by state news agency RIA-Novosti.

"Charges will be presented in the near future," he said, according to the Interfax agency.

Some Russian news reports earlier cited unnamed sources as saying Whelan had been indicted on espionage charges that carry a possible prison sentence of 20 years.

Officials haven't given details of Whelan's suspected activities and he was initially identified only as an American. His concurrent Canadian, British and Irish citizenships became known on Friday.

U.S. Ambassador Jon Huntsman Jr. visited Whelan on Wednesday in Moscow's Lefortovo Prison, a 130-year-old facility noted for strict conditions. Britain, Canada and Ireland have applied for consular access to him.

Whelan, 48, was discharged from the Marines for bad conduct. He works as the global security director for a U.S. automobile parts manufacturer and lives in Michigan. His family has said he was in Moscow to attend a wedding.

His brother, David, told the AP that Whelan loves to travel and likes to "interact with the people in the places that he goes," but that Whelan would be too "conspicuous" to be selected as a spy.

David Whelan said his family had had no direct contact with Paul and had received no details about the espionage charges from either the Russian or U.S. governments.

"He likes to go places and Russia happens to be a place where he knows people and when he's there, he does go and visit," David Whelan said.

Paul Whelan established an account on VKontakte, a social media service similar to Facebook that is popular among Russians, which showed he had scores of contacts in Russia. Many attended universities affiliated with the military, civil aviation or technical studies. Many share his interest in sports and firearms.

Also Saturday, the Foreign Ministry said it was seeking information about a Russian who was arrested Dec. 29 in Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands, a United States commonwealth in the Pacific.

In a statement, the ministry said Sergei Makarenko was sent to the U.S. state of Florida after his arrest and it wants consular access to him.

The Saipan Tribune reported that Makarenko was indicted in 2017 in Florida for the alleged illegal shipment of military goods to Russia.

Konstantin Kosachev, head of the international affairs committee of the upper house of the Russian parliament, said Makarenko's arrest was "the latest attack on a citizen of Russia outside the frame work of international law," Interfax reported.

Russian to be sent to Florida to face arms charges

A Russian national was arrested in the American territory of the Northern Mariana Islands and was to be sent to Florida to face charges of attempting to export arms illegally and money laundering.

Federal court records show Dmitrii Makarenko was arrested in Saipan on Dec. 29. He is wanted in Florida on one count of conspiracy to export defense articles without a license, four counts of attempting to export defense articles without a license, and two counts of money laundering.

The 72-year-old Makarenko's whereabouts were not immediately clear, but a judge in Saipan signed an order on Dec. 31 to have him taken to Florida.

A grand jury indictment filed in June 2017 accuses Makarenko of placing orders for items like night-vision rifle scopes, monoculars, and firearm ammunition primers with a Florida-based company.

Konstantin Kosachev, head of the international affairs committee of the upper house of the Russian parliament, said Makarenko's arrest was "the latest attack on a citizen of Russia outside the frame work of international law," Interfax reported. ***(AP)***

Tugboat headed to burning ship in Pacific Ocean

HONOLULU (AP)—A tugboat will try to recover bodies of crewmembers who abandoned a ship that caught fire while carrying cars from Japan to Hawaii.

The *Sincerity Ace*, a 650-foot (198-meter) car carrier, had 21 crewmembers on board when the fire started Monday.

Ships in the area rescued 16 people. Four were listed as unresponsive in the water and the U.S. Coast Guard suspended its search for one crewmember listed as missing.

Japanese shipping company Shoei Kisen Kaisha Ltd. owns the Panamanian-flagged vessel.

Company spokesman Darrell Wilson says the vessel could still be on fire.

He says the tugboat is expected to arrive Sunday or Monday to tow the ship and try to recover bodies.

In this Dec. 31, 2018 photo provided by the U.S. Coast Guard, a Coast Guard HC-130 Hercules aircrew flies over the 650-foot Sincerity Ace on fire 1,800 nautical miles northwest of Oahu in the Pacific Ocean.

AP

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Free #MarianasStrong concert this Saturday

As part of the inauguration events this month to install the new administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt.-Gov.-elect Arnold I. Palacios, the 2019 Inauguration Committee will be hosting a free concert, called #MarianasStrong Concert, that is dedicated to the ongoing recovery efforts from Super Typhoon Yutu.

The concert will be held at the Marianas Business Plaza on Saturday, Jan. 12, 2019, from 3pm to 10pm. A fireworks show starting at 9:30pm will cap the night.

"We invite the entire community to join us for this fun-filled night of music and comedy from the Marianas' best entertainers and comedians. We ask the community to please bring their own beach chairs," the committee said in a statement over the weekend.

This free concert for all ages will feature some of the best local talents in the CNMI and Guam, including Mix Plate, Joe McCarrel, Uprooted, Parker Yobei, JJ Concepcion, Big Jay Selepeo, Young Gohhdy, FriendZone, DJ Big Ken, and 9PM DJS. There will also be a special comedy performance by local talent Chinaman.

Food and drinks will be available for purchase by vendors such as 360 Restaurant, Gentlebrook, 22RAM, The Hut, Tony Roma's, Sierra Pearl Shakes, and AE Ice Cream Rolls. Attendees must be 21 or older to consume alcohol.

The event will also be featuring booths dedicated to ongoing relief efforts and they will be providing information, supplies, and resources with some of the local partners such as Karidat Social Services, Empty Vessel Ministries, the Marianas Young Professionals, and more.

Tribe Marianas and Roil Soil will be selling the commemorative inauguration version of the #MARIANASSTRONG shirts, which will be available for purchase at their booth.

Karidat, in collaboration with the Marianas Visitors Authority, will also be selling their edition of the #MarianasStrong shirts. All proceeds raised will go to Karidat's Yutu recovery efforts.

All proceeds raised at the concert will go to the ongoing Yutu recovery and relief efforts. ***(PR)***

GROUNDED VESSEL

A U.S. Coast Guard HC-130 Hercules aircrew flies over the 308-foot Chinese-flagged commercial fish carrier *Ou Ya Leng No. 6* on Taka Atoll in the Marshall Islands on Jan. 3, 2019. Two fishing vessels are en route and expected to arrive Thursday. The Republic of the Marshall Islands has also dispatched their patrol vessel *Lomor* to respond.

U.S. COAST GUARD

'Cannabis regs will be guided by best practices of others'

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Lawrence Duponcheel, the Tinian representative on the CNMI Cannabis Commission, assures those who still have misgivings that they will come up with rules and other regulations guided by the best practices of other jurisdictions that have already decriminalized the use of marijuana.

Duponcheel, the co-founder of local pro-cannabis group Sensible CNMI, said that those who helped in craft the previous House Bill 20-178, introduced by Rep. Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan), reviewed the marijuana legalization laws of various jurisdictions that had decriminalized the use of cannabis: Oregon, Colorado, California, Washington, Guam, Washington, D.C., Alaska, and Hawaii, among others.

"In a similar fashion, we will dive into the rules and regulations of jurisdictions that have had a high level of success with their programs and consider which components are appropriate for our rules here in the CNMI," Duponcheel told *Saipan Tribune*.

He said the commission would also work with the Marijuana Policy Project, Law Enforcement Action Partnership, and Americans for Safe Access, in addition to CNMI professionals in law enforcement, education, medicine, and local leaders, in ensuring that the Commonwealth would take the right direction in formulating the regulation and benefiting from its results.

MPP, LEAP, and ASA are organizations that back the legalization and regulation of cannabis use, whether for medical or recreational use. Both MPP, a group that has been working on sweeping marijuana policy reform in the nation, and ASA, an organization that backs safe and legal access to cannabis for medicinal and research use, are based in Washington, D.C.

LEAP is a non-profit group based in Medford, Massachusetts that pushes for advanced drug policies and criminal justice solutions for public safety. They are made up of current or former police officers, judges, prosecutors, and other criminal justice professionals.

Though the CNMI government's decision to legalize cannabis use in the CNMI also faced some opposition in the community, Duponcheel believes educating the citizens would help them understand the contents, purpose, and origin of Public Law 20-66

The CNMI is the first U.S. jurisdiction to regulate and tax cannabis as stated in P.L. 20-66, also known as the Taulamwar Sensible CNMI Cannabis Act of 2018.

"Just as we went out of our way to developing a high-quality piece of cannabis legislation for passage into law, I'm hopeful that the commission will go through great pains to ensure that the rules and regulations that govern the production, processing, sale, and use of cannabis are appropriate and of a very high quality," said Duponcheel.

"In this way, our communities should share a similar experience with other jurisdictions that have moved toward regulating and controlling cannabis, which are reductions in opioid use and accidental overdoses, reductions in alcohol use, improved public safety, reduced youth access to cannabis, development of a strong medical program, jobs creation, tourist destination enhancement, revenue generation, among other benefits."

Duponcheel is joined on the commission by Nadine Deleon Guerrero and Matthew Deleon Guerrero of Saipan, Valentino Taisacan Jr. of the Northern Islands, and Thomas Songsong of Rota.

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Man in car accident takes off

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

A man whose car collided with another vehicle last Thursday along Middle Road took off on foot before police arrived at the scene.

There were several speculations about what may have motivated the man to flee but police have yet to identify a motive. What is definite is that the man was driving a white pickup truck and it collided with a red Hyundai Accent car.

Department of Public Safety Commissioner Robert Guerrero said that investigation is still ongoing and DPS would release more information once the investigation is complete.

Police reported no fatalities and declined to identify the people involved pending the results of their investigation.

Guerrero

According to the driver of the Hyundai Accent, he was driving along Middle Road from LBC Garapan and had stopped to make a turn to the building across Mobil Middle Road.

While stopped at the inner lane, the driver said another vehicle stopped in front of him to turn into Mobil Middle Road. The driver said he thought it was clear so he took the turn and was surprised when the speeding pickup truck came into view and they collided with each other and fell into the ditch by the road.

The driver said that he went to check on the man driving the pickup and saw an older man. The man told him he was OK so he went to look for his phone in the car.

When police arrived, the driver said he was questioned about the owner of the pickup and he told police that he was there after the accident. Police later discovered that the man had already fled the scene, leaving behind his wallet and license.

A short while later, family members of the man showed up at the scene to talk with police and to retrieve the man's license and wallet, but police refused to surrender the man's wallet to his family.

Both cars were towed because the pickup was uninsured and unregistered while the driver of the Hyundai Accent did not have a license and the car was not drivable.

LDTF distributes donations, expects new container

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

The Lady Diann Torres Foundation distributed over the weekend their fourth batch of donations for victims of Super Typhoon Yutu at the San Antonio basketball court.

First Lady Diann Torres, who personally supervised the distributions last Saturday morning, estimated that about 500 people showed up.

Representatives of the foundation previously noted that last Saturday's container was from Las Vegas, Nevada.

"We are expecting a shipment out of San Diego, California within the next two weeks," Torres said, noting that specifics for the distribution would be posted in a separate announcement on the foundation's social media page.

The 40-foot container's leftover supplies would also be distributed in a future date, she noted.

Saturday's distribution included hygiene items, blankets, food, water, and other relief goods.

"Together with this container, we are distributing out Federal Emergency Management Agency water and meals-ready-to-eat," she said.

According to Torres, the foundation has been working with several off-island residents who have reached out to the foundation to ask for its help in the distribution.

"…We are trying to service those that are really affected by the typhoon—the people in the south," she said. "… But everybody is welcome to come down, even from the north," she added.

The foundation already distributed supplies at the Kagman Emergency Shelter Facility, coordinating with music organizations such as the Music of the Marianas Association and Dandan Marianas. They also previously distributed a container of items collected from the Pacific northwestern states at the Dandan softball pitch last Dec. 29, 2018.

KILILI

From Page 1

control of the House.

"Thanks to the people of the Mariana Islands for entrusting me to represent them in Congress for two more years," Sablan said. "It is a truly humbling responsibility; and I work every day to use this position to my fullest ability to improve the lives of the people I work for."

As a veteran legislator, Sablan expects to chair a subcommittee and take a leadership role over the next two years. He is a member of both the Natural Resources and the Education and Labor committees.

In addition to his widening national responsibilities as a senior member of Congress, the Marianas delegate has identified a number of priorities specific to the Marianas. He has already been successful at adding the funding for the Marianas to disaster relief legislation that passed the House before Christmas. Similar legislation helping areas hit by hurricanes, typhoons, wildfires, and other natural disasters is expected again in January. Sablan says he looks forward to putting even more help for the Marianas into a disaster bill, now that he is in the majority.

Sablan has also pledged to keep working for a more permanent status for groups of people in the Marianas, who were overlooked when Congress extended federal control of immigration to the islands in 2008. He was able to include the necessary provisions in legislation that passed the Senate with bipartisan support in 2013. The House Republican leadership refused to put that comprehensive immigration reform bill to a vote, although this week Senator Lamar Alexander (R-Tennessee) suggested that the bill would be the ultimate solution to the current government shutdown standoff with President Trump.

Other big-ticket items on Sablan's agenda for the Marianas are more funding for Medicaid and for food stamps. The Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare, gave the Marianas an additional $109 million for Medicaid. That money is almost used up and expires on Sept. 30. Sablan has already brought together a territories working group to address the expiring Obamacare funds. All five U.S. insular areas face the same Medicaid "cliff" this year.

Food stamp funding for the Marianas, which Sablan boosted by $31.5 million in the 2014 Agricultural Act, is also in danger of being used up this year. Thousands of Marianas families were eligible to tap into the food assistance money after Typhoon Mangkhut and Super Typhoon Yutu, drawing down available funds more quickly than planned. ***(PR)***

MAN

From Page 1

as spread through social media outlets.

Guerrero said that DPS is still investigating the incident and will release more information once the investigation is complete.

Guerrero did not disclose information about the driver or what kind of vehicle hit del Prado.

According to a statement from the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, it was DFEMS responders who brought the unresponsive del Prado to CHC's emergency room. Del Prado was pronounced dead 20 minutes after arriving at the ER.

DFEMS received a call from DPS Dispatch last Friday, Jan. 4, at 9:45pm, about an auto-pedestrian accident in front of Joeten Dandan.

Medic-4 and Rescue-1 from the Susupe Fire Station were sent at 9:46pm and arrived at the scene at 9:50pm.

At the scene, DFEMS emergency medical teams found del Prado unresponsive and immediately and loaded him onto an ambulance. Del Prado was en route to CHC at 9:56pm and EMTs tried to revive him on the way to CHC. He arrived at the ER at 10:04pm and was pronounced dead at 10:24pm.

Del Prado reportedly sustained several lacerations and injuries.

Del Prado was commonly seen loitering at the Joeten Dandan or Twins Dandan and was described as a nice homeless man by a number of individuals.

Del Prado is the second reported death this year; the first was the death of Eiki Akiyama. Akiyama died from a drowning incident off the shores of Bird Island on Jan 1.

FRANK

From Page 1

that time, were said to be trying to revive him via cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres ordered all flags in the CNMI to be flown at half-staff at all government and public buildings, instrumentalities and grounds from today until sunset on the day of Dela Cruz's burial.

Dela Cruz served from the 15th to 18th legislatures. He was the vice speaker under the leadership of former House speaker Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan). He was also a member of the House in the 20th Legislature and won his re-election bid for the coming 21st, finishing fifth among 12 candidates for the six seats of Precinct 3. He chaired the House Committee on Public Utilities, Communications, and Telecommunications.

Torres offered his and his family's condolences to Dela Cruz's family. "From my entire family and our Commonwealth, we extend our condolences to the family of [Rep.] Dela Cruz for his untimely passing. [Rep.] Dela Cruz was a humble, intelligent, and tireless leader.

"I have worked with him from my time in the Legislature to now as governor, and he has always been articulate on the issues facing our islands. He believed in raising the standard of living in the Marianas by developing our economy responsibly, enhancing our infrastructure, and protecting our environment."

He said Dela Cruz not only advocated for his constituents in Precinct 3, but for the entire Commonwealth.

"He truly stands firm in his beliefs and always advocated for the best interests of Precinct 3 and the Commonwealth.

"This is what made him well-respected by his colleagues and by everyone he has met. We just lost a true public servant, who served Precinct 3, the island of Saipan, and the Commonwealth honorably and admirably. I join my colleagues in the Legislature in mourning, as we honor his memory and life of service."

Condolences started pouring in on social media from some of his colleagues in the Legislature, with Deleon Guerrero expressing grief and shock over the untimely passing of Dela Cruz, whom he had the chance to serve with for five Legislatures.

"Most of our colleagues are saddened [with] his untimely passing. It was very sudden. I'm still in shock, since today we are celebrating the feast of the Three Kings. Now, it is marked by the death of a colleague and a friend," said Deleon Guerrero, who visibly tried to control his emotions.

"He cares very deeply for our people. He sponsored the law of having an elected attorney general. He always stood up against abuse and corruption. The CNMI lost a very strong and principled congressman. We truly lost one great leader."

Representative-elect L.J. Castro, who would have served with Dela Cruz in the coming 21st Legislature that opens its session next week, also offered the condolences of the family and praised Dela Cruz for his service. "Rep. Dela Cruz served the people of Precinct 3 for five terms and was recently elected to a sixth term this past election before his sudden passing."

"A maverick at heart, he served with humility and love and respect for his people and our Commonwealth. I personally looked up to him and was looking forward to finally getting the chance to work with him in the Legislature. I will be forever indebted to his kindness and generosity."

He also joins the family of Dela Cruz and the people of Precinct 3 in mourning. "Today, his family mourns the loss of a beloved husband, father and grandfather. His precinct mourns the passing of a great and humble public servant."

"My colleagues and I lost a great friend and confidante. Our deepest thoughts and prayers go out to his wife Lisa, children and their families during this difficult time," Castro added.

Sen. Sixto K. Igisomar (R-Saipan) posted on Facebook: "Join me in a moment of silence as we pray for the repose of the soul of our dear friend and colleague, The Hon. Francisco S. Dela Cruz, congressman. May God be with his family at this time of loss."

A special election could take place to fill the seat vacated by his passing as stated in Article II, Section IX of the CNMI Constitution: "A vacancy in the Legislature shall be filled by special election if one-half or more of the term remains.

VAN

From Page 1

mation yet as to who was found at fault.

Saipan Tribune learned from witnesses that the bicyclist had just come from a laundry shop and had crossed the pedestrian lane on his bicycle on his way home at about 8:30am.

As soon he reached the shoulder side of the outside northbound lane, the Toyota Sienna that had just come from the parking lot of a hardware store next to Chong's Air-Conditioning & Refrigeration struck him.

When the van stopped, about a foot of its bumper was on the outside inner lane of the road.

The driver of the van was a customer of the hardware. The van and the bicycle had minor damage.

DFEMS emergency medical technicians responded, treated the victim, then brought him to CHC.

The scene is an accident-prone area. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

DUE TO FEDERAL GOV'T SHUTDOWN

Suit for delay in green card petition is further delayed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Proceedings in another civil case against the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for a four-year delay in an immigration petition is further delayed in light of the federal government shutdown.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona approved last week the motion filed by DHS to hold the proceedings in the lawsuit of Alicia Yen and Chen Chien-Li.

Manglona ordered the U.S. Attorney's Office, which is lawyer for DHS and its co-defendants, to notify the court as soon as Congress has appropriated funds for the Department of Justice.

All current deadlines are also extended, according to Manglona.

In a motion to stay proceedings, assistant U.S. attorney Jessica F. Wessling said the appropriations act that had been funding the DOJ expired last Dec. 21, and appropriations to the department lapsed.

The same is true for several other executive agencies, including the DHS, Wessling said.

The DOJ does not know when funding will be restored by Congress.

She said DOJ attorneys and employees of the federal DHS are prohibited from working, even on a voluntary basis, except in very limited circumstances, including "emergencies involving the safety of human life or the protection of property."

Wessling requested a stay of all proceedings in the case until Congress has restored appropriations to DOJ, including deadlines and hearings.

Yen and Chien-Li did not object to the motion.

Yen is a U.S. citizen living in New York. Chien-Li is her Taiwanese father, who stays in the CNMI.

Yen and Chien-Li sued DHS and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services officials last September for an alleged four-year delay in adjudicating her green card petition for him.

Yen and her father, Chien-Li, are suing USCIS district director for District 26 David Gulick, USCIS director L. Francis Cissna, and U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen M. Nielsen, for alleged violation of the Administrative Procedure Act.

Yen and Chien-Li, through counsel Joseph E. Horey, want the court to declare that DHS and USCIS' failure to act on their petition and application "is and has been arbitrary, capricious, short of statutory right, and without observance of procedure required by law."

Yen and Chien-Li are seeking a writ of mandamus that would compel USCIS to adjudicate their pending petition and application.

Under the Immigration and Nationality Act, an alien living in the U.S. who is an immediate relative of a U.S. citizen may adjust to that of a lawful permanent resident.

Horey said that, on Dec. 8, 2014, Yen filed with USCIS an I-130 petition on behalf of her father, Chien-Li, seeking to have him classified as an immediate relative of a U.S. citizen based on their family relationship.

To this date, Horey said, plaintiffs' petition and application have not been adjudicated and they have received no further news of any progress toward adjudication.

TD01W no longer threatens

Tropical Depression 01W has shifted course and no longer poses a threat to the CNMI.

According to the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, the latest forecast track for Tropical Depression 01W has shifted southward, passing south of Guam around Friday or Saturday.

At 10am yesterday, Tropical Depression 01W was still located in the Marshall Islands, moving north-northwest at 7 mph with maximum sustained winds of 30 mph.

The forecast stated that Tropical Depression 01W remains a poorly-organized depression but is still expected to gradually intensify as it continues north-northwest through the Marshall Islands with a gradual turn toward the west-northwest on Monday. Tropical Depression 01W could become a tropical storm Monday.

The NWS would like to urge the community verify the authenticity of weather information.

"We've received numerous reports of an audio recording circulating via social media claiming a possible typhoon or super typhoon threatening Guam on Monday/Tuesday. This recording is believed to have originated following a weather brief on Typhoon Mangkhut in September. If you receive weather information via social media, verify its authenticity," NWS said. *(Kimberly A. Bautista)*

TEMPORARY CLASSROOMS
Temporary classrooms that will be installed at the Northern Marianas College's Al Terlaje campus will be set up at the empty soccer field on the south side of the campus, beside the damaged NMC gymnasium. The field is now being prepared for the installation of the classrooms, which would allow NMC to resume morning classes. Right now, afternoon and evening classes are being held at the Saipan Southern High School campus.
KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

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#MarianasSTRONG

The #MarianasSTRONG Year-end Celebration and Yutu 5K Holiday Fun Run to the Marianas/Annual Mochitsuki Festival held at the Paseo de Marianas in Garapan last Dec. 29 drew a large crowd. The Fun Run itself had 97 participants. The money raised during the event, which was organized by the Marianas Visitors Authority, will go to Karidat Social Services for Super Typhoon Yutu's recovery efforts.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

CHCC warns of increased number of flu-like illnesses

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. issued a health advisory last Friday to alert the public to a spike in the number flu-like illnesses in the community.

In the advisory, CHCC said that its surveillance data shows an increased number of flu cases during the month of December 2018.

It warned that flu activity is widespread in most of the islands at this time of the year, and is more pronounced after the occurrence of Super Typhoon Yutu. It predicts the high levels of flu activity to continue for several more weeks.

Influenza, more commonly known as the flu, is a highly contagious viral disease. It is primarily spread by person to person contact via coughing or sneezing. Symptoms include cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, fever, chills, and body aches.

Preventing flu

■ Get vaccinated.

A yearly flu shot is recommended for everyone 6 months and older. It is not too late to get a flu shot for yourself and for your loved ones.

Vaccination is especially important for protecting those at high risk for serious flu complications, including: young children, pregnant women, adults 65 years and older, and anyone with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes, and heart disease.

■ Stop the spread: W.A.T.C.H. IT

- Wash your hands
- Avoid sick people & Avoid touching your eyes, nose & mouth
- Teach others how to prevent the flu
- Cover your cough or sneeze

Have an emergency plan ready in case you get sick

■ Contact your healthcare provider

People who are at high risk of developing serious flu complications when they get the flu: the very young, the very old, pregnant women, and those with underlying illnesses like heart conditions and respiratory lung problems.

People who are very sick with flu symptoms like shortness of breath and difficulty breathing, chest pain, very high and persistent fevers, and ear ache. These are signs that should lead parents or the individuals to go see their doctor. The doctor may then prescribe medications to treat the flu.

Take medication(s) as recommended by your doctor to treat the flu.

If you are already sick with the flu, please contact your doctor for advice before visiting the clinic - this is to prevent and avoid exposure and spread of the disease. By doing this, you will help avoid exposing other people at the clinics.

For more information, contact CHCC Division of Public Health Services, Immunization Program at (670) 236-

New year, new forest enhancement project

DEDEDO, Guam—The U.S. Marine Corps Activity Guam Forest Enhancement Project is beginning to take shape on Naval Base Guam Telecommunications Station with the arrival of containers and equipment to be part of the new Native Plant Nursery set to open this year.

The project will include native plant seed collection, salvage, storage and nursery propagation for use in future conservation projects as identified in the 2018 Biological Opinion amendment for the U.S. Marine Corps Relocation.

"This is just a small step, but our team sees the future success of this nursery project as a win for Guam conservation," said Lauren Gutierrez, natural resource specialist for Marine Corps Activity Guam. "Our multi-decade forest enhancement work is an opportunity to establish partnerships with academic institutions, non-profits and government agencies."

Native limestone forest plants will be collected from DOD construction sites and seeds will be gathered from habitats within military installations. Enough seeds will be collected to enhance existing disturbed limestone forest commensurate in size to the acreage of limestone forest being developed.

This process of rehabilitation using native vegetation helps to restore the forest structure and species composition to levels that would function similar to an undisturbed forest.

"We all want to give our island's forests a fighting chance by providing sustainable habitats that will support native flora and fauna for generations to come," said Gutierrez. ***(PR)***

RELIEF HANDOUT CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

An employee of the Lady Diann Torres Foundation prepares donated good from the mainland U.S. for distribution last Dec. 29, 2018 at the Dandan Softball Field.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
2nd Floor Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan, MP 96950

ADDENDUM NO. 1
January 1, 2019

DPW19-IFB-006; Kannat Tabla Road, Flood Control & Drainage Improvements, the Secretary of Public Works and the Director of Procurement and Supply wishes to extend the IFB submission date and attachment of Request for Information.

1. General: the following revisions, additions, corrections, and/or clarifications to the specification and drawings shall apply to the work affected thereby. Careful note of this Addendum shall be taken by the bidder/contractor herein. In the event of a conflict between drawings, specifications and this Addendum, the contents of this Addendum shall govern. All further conflicts in the work resulting from, or caused by, the contents of this Addendum must be brought to the attention of the Contracting Officer for resolution. Failure to acknowledge this bid Addendum in accordance with instructions may subject your Proposal to rejection on the affected item(s)/service(s).
2. Sealed bids must be marked **"DPW19-IFB-006."** For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two (2) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan MP 96950 no later than 10:00 a.m., December 27, 2018 **is changed to read 10:00 a.m., local time January 30, 2019.**
3. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:00 a.m., local time December 27, 2018 and may be transmitter via facsimile to (670) 664-1515 or via e-mail to **procurement@cnmidof.net is changed to read 10:00 a.m., local time, January 30, 2019.** For bidder located outside of the CNMI, an original and two (2) copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government of a foreign country no later than December 27, 201 **is changed to read January 30, 2019** and mailed to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply at P.O. Box 510008 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 and BID documents must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than the close of business January 08, 2019 **is changed to read February 11, 2019** Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.
4. Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan at 10:00 a.m., local time, January 11, 2019 is changed **to read 10:00 a.m., local time February 13, 2019.** However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside of the CNMI, bids will be opened at 10:00 a.m., local time, on December 27, 2018 **is changed to read at 10:00 a.m., local time, January 30, 2019.**

All other requirements of the Invitation to Bid the project package shall remain as stated.

/s/ James A. Ada
Secretary of Public Works

/s/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, P & S

END OF ADDENDUM NO.1

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality

Ralph DLG. Torres
Governor
Victor B. Hocog
Lt. Governor

DEQ: P.O. Box 501304, DCRM: P.O. Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950-1304
DEQ Tel.: (670) 664-8500/01; Fax: (670) 664-8540
DCRM Tel.: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
www.deq.gov.mp and www.crm.gov.mp

Eli D. Cabrera
Administrator
Ray S. Masga
Director, DEQ
Janice Castro
Director, DCRM

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality regulates the importation of the following specific pesticides into the CNMI: any pesticide or pesticide device manufactured in or shipped by or through a foreign country; any termiticide, including those used for crack, crevice, and spot treatment; all general use pesticides (GUPs) used to control pest on fruit and/or vegetable crops or other agricultural products; and any Restricted Use Pesticides (RUPs) from any country.

In accordance with NMIAC § 65-70-205, BECQ hereby requires any individual or business intending to import these types of pesticides to submit a Notice of Intent to Import Pesticides and Pesticide Devices (NOII) to BECQ for approval. Upon approval of the NOII purchased/ordered can be placed for the pesticides or pesticide devices.

Within 2-3 days before the arrival of the pesticides BECQ requires the importer to submit a Notice of Arrival (NOA) for the pesticide or pesticide devices of the corresponding NOII. The NOA is not to be substituted for the NOII. No pesticide or pesticide device can be imported or released into the CNMI without BECQ's written approval on the NOA. A non-refundable fee shall be submitted with the NOA forms; fifty dollars ($50) for each shipment of RUPs and fifteen dollars ($15) for each shipment of GUPs payable to the CNMI Treasury.

In accordance with NMIAC § 65-70-210 and 220, if pesticides or pesticide devices specified in this section have arrived without a NOII, the shipment shall be detained or denied entry into the CNMI. The consignee/importer shall pay a non-refundable storage fee of $10 per day for each storage container (i.e. 55-gallon drum) for GUPs and $25 per day for each storage container (i.e. 55-gallon drum) for RUPs starting from the date of detainment by BECQ or authorized agents, until the pesticides and or devices are returned or disposed.

For more information please contact BECQ at 664-8500 or 664-8511.

Public warned of high-risk rip current and high surf

A large swell will continue to produce hazardous surf and dangerous rip currents in the CNMI and there is a high risk of rip currents through Tuesday afternoon.

A small craft advisory remains in effect until 6pm Tuesday. Fresh to strong winds and rough seas will continue in the Marianas waters.

Northeast winds with frequent gusts and combined seas of 8 to 11 feet will produce hazardous conditions for operators of small craft through at least Tuesday.

A high surf advisory was in effect until 6pm last night and a beach hazards statement was in effect through yesterday afternoon.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, surf of 7 to 9 feet is expected along east facing reefs. This surf will produce a high risk of rip currents for a few days.

The stinging Portuguese man-o-war jellyfish are washing up on local beaches and are likely to continue washing up over the next few days.

These jellyfish have been reported on the east coast and on the west coasts of Guam.

Man-o-war can inflict a painful sting even after they have died. Remain watchful and avoid touching them. Closed toe shoes are recommended as long as these animals are washing up.

A beach hazards statement is issued when threats such as rip currents, longshore currents, sneaker waves and other hazards create life-threatening conditions in the surf zone. Caution should be used when in or near the water.

Th general public is advised to avoid venturing near reefs and beaches, especially those facing east or north. Large breaking waves can knock you down and cause serious injuries. Strong rip currents will be life threatening. If you become caught in a rip current, remain calm. Swim parallel to shore, then back toward the beach when possible.

Inexperienced mariners, especially those operating smaller vessels, should avoid sailing in these conditions. ***(PR)***

JON PEREZ

Dr. Bobby Cruz, Ed.D., receives the resolution from Rep. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan) in last week's House session at the House of Representatives chamber on Capital Hill.

Cruz: Education as a tool also advances society

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives presented Dr. Bobby Cruz with a special resolution in their session last week, commending the former Marianas High School vice principal's contributions to the CNMI in the field of education.

Cruz, who is currently the director of Instructional Technology & Distance Learning at the Public School System, believes that education as a tool does not only improve one's long-term status in life but also affects one's attitude and social change.

This was borne out by his doctoral research, which focused on one's mindset that influences future success.

What I found out is that how you think greatly impacts whether you succeed or fail," he said. "…I would be able to perpetuate that message, especially for the youth of the CNMI, that they would adopt a mindset that's going to help them to succeed [and] ultimately…the CNMI. That is my commitment."

Cruz believes this is achievable, with PSS partnering with the Legislature and local community organizations like the Marianas Young Professionals, of which he is a part of.

"This [House resolution] means a lot to me. …I see this resolution as a challenge… on how to answer the question, 'What's next?' …I feel that you…are calling me to do greater things. I hope that I could do you justice in continuing to serve the CNMI," Cruz told the House lawmakers.

He also thanked his family for the support that they have given him through the years. "I'm blessed to have the family that I have. My grandfather is still alive, which I am still thankful for. He says that he is still young and he acts like it."

"This resolution is dedicated to my entire family. Above all else, it is dedicated to my mom, who has sacrificed so much for us. To my sister [Bonny Lynn], my partner Dan, my brother-in-law [Billy Grow], to all of you guys, you are special to me. Thank you for building me, having faith in me, and for just lifting me up."

2 fine arts majors at UOG awarded scholarships

University of Guam students Hunter Orland and Madison Orland were recently the recipients of Dr. Rebecca A. Stephenson Scholarships, both valued at $1,000, for the 2018-2019 academic year.

The recipients are fraternal twin sisters and are both freshmen fine arts majors in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

The scholarship was created in 2008 by UOG professor emerita Rebecca A. Stephenson, a former anthropology professor, after her retirement. Recipients for the award must be undergraduates in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences and are selected based on their essay submission, letters of reference, and academic standing.

Students interested in applying for this or other UOG scholarships should stay tuned to the UOG Financial Aid webpage for opportunities. ***(UOG)***

From left, Sharleen Santos-Bamba, associate dean of the University of Guam College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences; Hunter Orland, a freshman fine arts major and scholarship recipient; Rebecca A. Stephenson, UOG professor emerita of anthropology; Madison Orland, a freshman fine arts major and scholarship recipient; and James Sellmann, dean of the CLASS.

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

Updated answers to citizenship civics test

Are you preparing for the naturalization test? As you study for the U.S. history and government (civics) test, make sure that you know the most current answers to these questions.

Periodically, answers to the civics test change to reflect the results of federal and state elections and appointments or to clarify content and ensure consistency in terminology. The revised answers to the questions below are effective immediately.

20. Who is one of your state's U.S. senators now?

The answer to this question may change as the result of elections, appointments, or retirements.

Give the name of one of your state's current U.S. senators. For a list of current members of the U.S. Senate, visit senate.gov.

District of Columbia residents and residents of U.S. territories should answer that D.C. (or the territory where the applicant lives) has no U.S. senators.

23. Name your U.S. representative.

The answer to this question may change as the result of elections, appointments, or retirements.

Give the name of your current U.S. representative. For a list of current members of the U.S. House of Representatives, visit house.gov.

Residents of territories with nonvoting delegates or resident commissioners may provide the name of that delegate or commissioner. Also acceptable is any statement that the territory has no (voting) representatives in Congress.

43. Who is the governor of your state now?

The answer to this question may change as the result of elections, appointments, or retirements, depending on inauguration dates.

Give the name of your state's current governor. For a list of current governors, please visit usa.gov/states-and-territories.

District of Columbia residents should answer that D.C. does not have a governor.

47. What is the name of the speaker of the House of Representatives now?

The House of Representatives generally elects the speaker of the House on the first day of every new Congress. The answer to this question may change after the election.

Give the name of the current speaker of the House. Visit uscis.gov/citizenship/testupdates for the name of the speaker of the House of Representatives. ***(USCIS)***

AFTER 105-DAY DEPLOYMENT IN WESTERN PACIFIC

USCG cutter and crew return home for the holidays

ALAMEDA, Calif.—The crew aboard U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Munro* returned to their homeport on Coast Guard Island on Dec. 24, following a 105-day, multi-mission deployment to the Western Pacific Ocean.

The cutter, with an embarked MH-65 Dolphin helicopter and aircrew from Air Station Barbers Point, Hawaii, traveled over 17,000 nautical miles during their Western Pacific Living Marine Resources patrol.

Munro's law enforcement teams conducted 10 at-sea inspections of foreign-flagged fishing vessels on the high seas to counter illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing practices in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission area.

Under a newly signed bilateral agreement between the United States and Fiji, *Munro* became the first U.S. Coast Guard asset to embark a Fijian navy shiprider.

The shiprider agreement, signed Nov. 12 by Michael Goldman, charge d'affaires of the U.S. Embassy in Suva and Fiji's Minister of Defense Ratu Inoke Kubuabola, allows Fijian officials to board United States assets and conduct law enforcement from them in Fiji's territorial waters. The agreement allows both nations to pursue common causes such as fisheries protection.

Fisheries are an important renewable source of food and income to many Pacific nations and it is in both Fiji and the United States' interests to protect those resources from illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. The agreement allows both nations to cooperate on common goals and regional stability.

Prior to arriving in Fiji, the cutter visited the Solomon Islands and held a rededication ceremony at a memorial to the cutter's namesake, Signalman 1st Class Douglas Munro. Munro gave his life during the Battle of Guadalcanal and is the Coast Guard's only Medal of Honor recipient.

"The crew worked tirelessly to execute 10 fisheries boardings, 186 flight evolutions, and dozens of boat operations in support of fisheries enforcement, which demonstrates the importance of the U.S. Coast Guard's presence in the Western Pacific," said *Munro*'s commanding officer, Capt. Jim Estramonte. "Munro's successful deployment paves the way for future Coast Guard Oceania patrols. Having the opportunity to bring the cutter to Guadalcanal, a place of Coast Guard lore, made the patrol even more meaningful for the crew."

Munro is the Coast Guard's sixth national security cutter, which are capable of executing multiple national security missions, including support to U.S. combatant commanders. These Legend class cutters are 418 feet long, 54 feet wide, and have a 4,600 long-ton displacement. They have a top speed in excess of 28 knots, a range of 12,000 nautical miles, endurance of up to 90 days and can hold a crew of up to 142.

The Coast Guard is scheduled to commission its seventh national security cutter, the Coast Guard cutter Kimball, in the coming months. Kimball will be homeported in Honolulu and will enhance the Coast Guard's presence throughout the Indo-Pacific.

"As the Department of Homeland Security's sole armed service, the Coast Guard's unique authorities, capabilities, missions, and partnerships enable us to expertly engage in the Indo-Pacific," said Vice Adm. Linda Fagan, the Coast Guard's Pacific Area commander. "Coast Guard cutter *Munro*'s deployment demonstrates that security abroad equals security at home: enhancing our partners' capabilities is a force multiplier in combating transnational criminal and terrorist organizations, deterring our adversaries, and protecting the United States' interests." ***(USCG)***

PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS MATTHEW S. MASASCHI

Friends and family members of U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Munro* crewmembers await the cutter's return home to Coast Guard Island in Alameda, Calif., following the cutter's 105-day, 17,000-nautical mile, multi-mission deployment to the Western Pacific Ocean, Dec. 24, 2018.

PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS MATTHEW S. MASASCHI

A Coast Guard cutter *Munro* crewmember greets his son after the cutter returned home to Alameda, Calif., on Dec. 24, 2018, following a 105-day, 17,000-nautical mile, multi-mission deployment to the Western Pacific Ocean.

PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS MATTHEW S. MASASCHI

A Coast Guard cutter *Munro* crewmember embraces his children after the cutter returned home to Alameda, Calif., Dec. 24, 2018.

U.S. COAST GUARD/PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS MATTHEW WEST

Coast Guard cutter *Munro* crew members conduct flight operations with an Air Station Barbers Point HM-65 Dolphin helicopter aircrew from the flight deck on the *Munro* in the Central Pacific on Dec. 4, 2018.

U.S. COAST GUARD/PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS MATTHEW WEST

Capt. James Estramonte, commanding officer of the Coast Guard cutter *Munro*, and Fijian navy Sub-Lt. Opeti Enesi, a Fijian shiprider, hold a press conference in Suva, Fiji, on Dec. 7, 2018. The conference announced the embarkation of the first Fijian shiprider on a Coast Guard cutter following the signing of a bilateral enforcement agreement between the U.S. and Fiji in November.

U.S. COAST GUARD/ PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS MATTHEW WEST

The Coast Guard cutter *Munro* crew conducts air operations with an Air Station Barbers Point HM-65 Dolphin helicopter aircrew while on patrol in the Central Pacific on Dec. 4, 2018. The cutter was en route to Fiji after visiting Honiara on Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands

Coast Guard cutter *Munro* navigates through the Oakland Estuary en route to the cutter's homeport of Coast Guard Island in Alameda, Calif. on Dec. 24, 2018, following a 105-day, 17,000-nautical mile, multi-mission deployment to the Western Pacific Ocean.

U.S. COAST GUARD/PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS MATTHEW S. MASASCHI

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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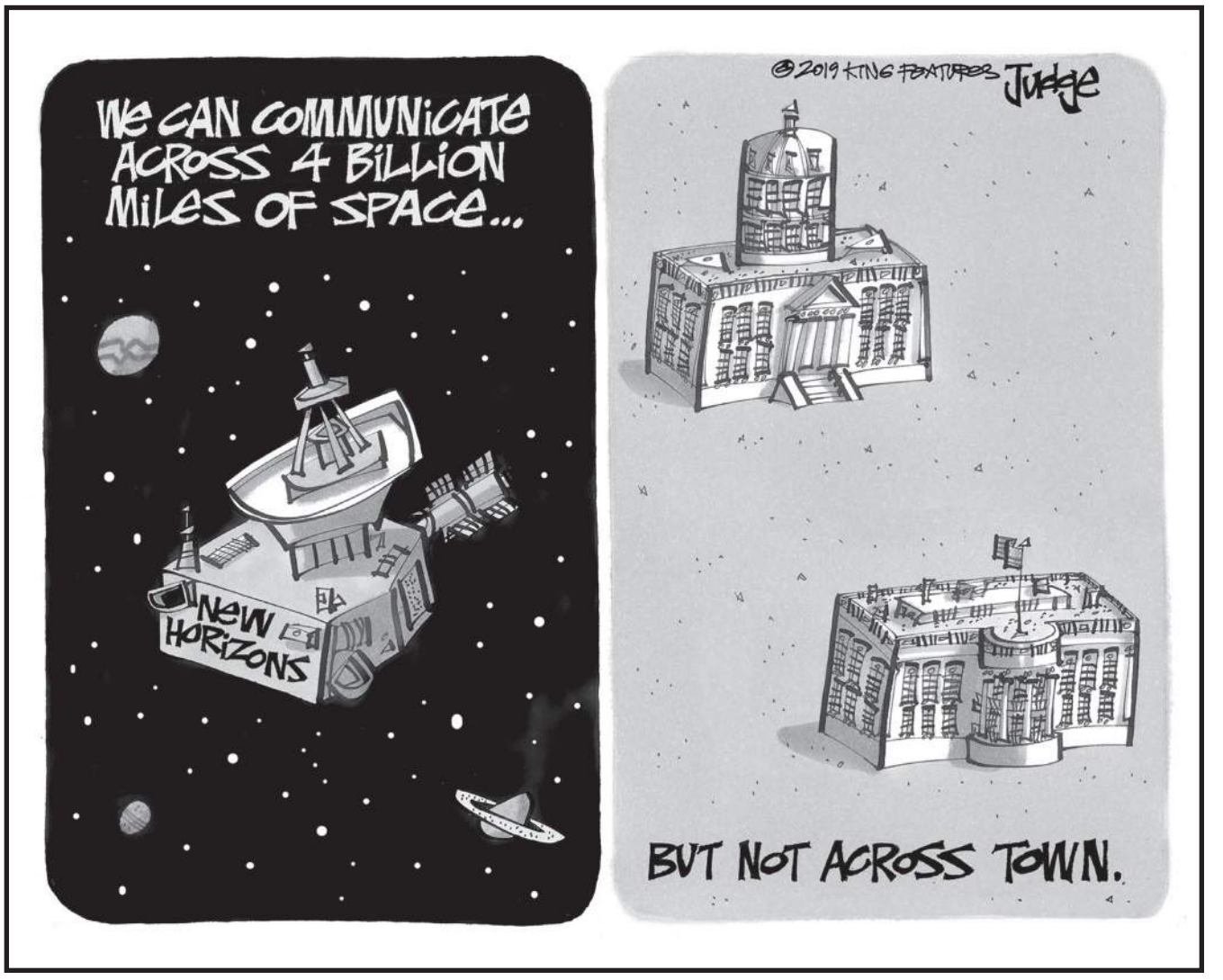

EDITORIAL

Social media is hurting America, and 2019 is the year we need to do something about it

By now, we know that social media is more likely to bring out the worst in us than the best in us. Or, more accurately, it is likely to bring out the worst of us, while the silent many just groan and become more dispirited at the state of things.

The question that we need to ask ourselves this year, though, is whether social media is changing us as a society and hurting us as a people. The evidence appears increasingly plain that it is. Our worry is that, as Americans, we are increasingly unwilling to consider ideas that are contrary to our own biases and beliefs, that we are that much more eager to tune them out or shout them down or that we just don't encounter them at all in our streams of information.

These days, people who disagree aren't just our neighbors with different points of view. They are our political enemies, called out as such over and over not only in the gutter stream of cable "news" and internet comments, but also more frequently in social media posts.

On an editorial board like ours that uses as its guideposts that people and human liberty matter, this sense of separation rings starkly because it comes from both directions. On any given day, we are called a shill for the left or the right. That sort of feedback doesn't bother us much. Newspaper editorial boards are used to taking knocks because we often present a broad range of opinions and arguments. What's concerning, though, is the increasing sense that many Americans don't or won't hear other perspectives.

Some of us are becoming like children who will eat only what we like at every meal. Try to sneak in a vegetable and a tantrum ensues. The reactions are childish because they don't answer argument with argument or reason with reason. They are emotional, not logical, in their responses to things with which they disagree. So many people online are often so assured of the self-evident righteousness of their perspectives that they don't bother to support them with arguments or counterarguments. They just go right to the ad hominem attacks and the dehumanizing.

Social media doesn't just exacerbate this problem, it also feeds on it. Algorithms are set to ensure a steady diet of confirmation bias and emotional manipulation with every click of the mouse.

In December, the Pew Research Center reported that social media have surpassed newspapers as a source of news for Americans. Twenty percent of Americans now cite social media as a frequent news source. It's easy to lament this as a newspaper. But the more important question is whether we should lament it as Americans. Take an honest look at the quality of information and the quality of the national discourse and the answer seems clear that we should not continue down this path.

We know that social media has become the preferred platform autocracies use to control their populaces and un-

See SOCIAL on Next Page

A reminder of how the Nazis humiliated the Jews

By ABRAHAM GUTMAN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

As a Jewish kid in Israel I was obsessed with the Holocaust. From a very early age, I wanted to learn more about the atrocity—the magnitude of which I couldn't fathom. It scared me. I couldn't let go of the thought that I could have been in the Holocaust. And although death and being separated from my family terrified me, I was just as afraid of the humiliation that was inflicting people who were just like me and my family.

So when I saw the video of a black teenage wrestler being forced to cut off his dreadlocks to compete, my mind immediately went to an image from the Holocaust that has stuck with me over the years—Nazi soldiers cutting the beards of Jewish men in the street.

Last month, wrestling referee Alan Maloney told Andrew Johnson, a 16-year-old black wrestler for the Buena Regional High School Chiefs in Atlantic County, that he couldn't compete because of his dreadlocks. Maloney, who referred to the dreadlocks as "braids," rejected Johnson's hair covering because "it wasn't in its natural state," according to the Johnson family lawyer. Johnson had two options: cut the dreadlocks or forfeit. He had 90 seconds to decide what to do because Maloney came late and missed the weigh-in when referees usually make sure that all athletes meet regulation and resolve any issues that arise. Under pressure and not wanting to disappoint his teammates, Johnson stood as an athletic trainer quickly cut his hair. Johnson went on the mat and knocked out his opponent, contributing to his high school's win.

A video of Johnson getting his dreadlocks cut went viral and invoked outrage.

The incident says so much about American racism—Johnson's situation exemplifies a process that makes up rules that require people of color to go the extra mile. And it is hard to think of a rule more humiliating than forcing a kid to destroy something that is part of his identity, and something so deeply linked to blackness. Maloney's choice of words that Johnson's hair is "not in its natural state" makes it even worse.

Is it really surprising that Maloney used racial slurs in the past toward a black referee?

I think back to my elementary and middle-school classes about the Holocaust in Tel Aviv. We were taught that years before the extermination of Jews, Nazi soldiers in Germany and then Poland would harass Jewish people. One way to humiliate Jewish men was to stop them on the street and cut off their beards. The beard is important in Judaism both according to the laws of the Torah but also according to Jewish tradition and spirituality.

Beards are so meaningful in Judaism that a couple of years ago, an ultra-orthodox rabbi in Israel compared the requirement of the Israeli Defense Forces that non-religious soldiers keep a clean shave to the Nazis shaving Jewish men in the Holocaust and called on soldiers to refuse shaving "even if he will receive one hundred lashes and go to prison" (religious soldiers can get an exemption that allows them not to shave).

The Nazis cut the beards of Jewish men as a way to demonstrate control—to humiliate Jews by showing them that they don't have power even over their own bodies. The choice of the beard is intentional. The Nazis attacked the visible element of being Jewish and declared it not welcomed by destroying it.

That is how dehumanization happens. That is how shame is developed. In silence, standing, cutting a part of you so that your body is cleared of your identity. It is cutting the beard, forcing women to stand naked, replacing your name with a tattooed number—those actions of the Nazis were the ways to break any semblance of pride of being Jewish. Shame makes people hide, not resist.

Johnson didn't have the opportunity to resist. Though no team or school member directed him to cut his dreadlocks and he made the decision on his own, the weight of his team's success was on his shoulders. He did what black people are time-and-again told to do by authority figures—he complied even when the request was unreasonable. The price of noncompliance, of asserting your rights, is just too high. Even if the referee just enforced a rule, was there really no other solution? Was there really no regulation hair cover anywhere to be found? Or was asking a black teenager to sacrifice part of his identity just the easiest and fastest way to get on with the match?

Johnson went on to win and eventually his hair will grow back—but the lifelong consequences of this experience can't be quantified. Witnessing images of the humiliation of Jews stuck with me for decades. I can only imagine how this event will stick with Johnson and his family.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

I shouldn't be telling you this, but…

By GINA BARRECA
The Hartford Courant

Gina Barreca is a professor of English literature at the University of Connecticut and the author of 10 books. She can be reached at www.ginabarreca.com.

"We should talk. Are you sitting down? In my humble opinion and with no offense, there's something you should know. Don't worry, but I should warn you: You won't like it. I'm just being honest. Look, I genuinely care for you. That's why I'm the only one telling you what everybody's saying behind your back. Don't tell anybody this came from me. Even though you asked me not to bring it up, there's no need to get upset, because I'm saying this with all due respect."

And those, my friends, are some of the worst ways to start a conversation.

My stomach hurts as I'm typing the words. That's how anxious they make me, and I'm not a delicate flower. Even as I ridicule these ghastly phrases by piling them on top of each other in an attempt to diminish their power, they sting my fingers as I hit the keyboard. That's how poisonous they are.

Insensitive cliches, delivered with barely repressed glee, have exactly the opposite effect of the expression "abracadabra" – they make everything magically slam shut instead of open up. Want to terrify your listener into short breaths, dilated pupils and rapid heartbeats? Using a confidentially condescending tone of voice, start your sentence with "Not that it's really any of my business, but ..." and watch the color drain from their face.

A conversation beginning with "We should talk" has never ended with a hug and a kiss. Never in my life have I come away feeling better after a tete-a-tete initiated via "Don't take this personally."

And anyone who lives in the mistaken belief that muttering "I probably shouldn't even be telling you this" will bring us closer together has made a perilous choice. Honey, if you shouldn't be telling me this, if you're betraying someone else's confidence by saying it, if it only serves to make you feel important because you think you have a secret, then you're right. You probably shouldn't tell me this.

Mark Twain summed it up succinctly when he wrote, "It takes your enemy and your friend, working together, to hurt you to the heart: one to slander you and the other to get the news to you." I'd add that the friend who gets the news to you is not really your friend. Does a true friend whisper into your ear a piece of gossip that will make you miserable, especially if it's about something you can't change?

Beware the bringer of contraband information. Examine their motives.

Beware, too, those who begin conversations in ways that depend on the bad fortunes of others. Those who enjoy jaunty rounds of "Guess Who's Dead?" play a version of this bad conversational game.

The game of "Guess Who's Dead?" gets increasingly unnerving as we age, given that the list of possible correct answers gets longer. Yet I never know how to answer. I mean, do you really want me to guess? Do we go by alphabetical order, age, body mass index, or wish fulfillment? Is it like charades, where you can give hints: "OK, two syllables, sounds like 'bowling.'" Rolling? Rolling Stone? Keith Richards? No, it can't be. Keith Richards, 74, smoking cigarettes since he was conceived, will bury us all. When anybody asks, "Guess who just died?" I simply reply, "It's not Keith Richards, so just tell me already."

Everyone has their own take on the worst conversation starter. But these are not so much pet peeves as they are the guard dogs of our sanity.

For UConn alumnae Christine Avarnetaki Tarrio, it's "Do you remember the (insert something of which you have no recollection) I loaned you eight years ago?"

For Heidi Strandt Andrews of Wheaton, Ill., it's "What are you doing (insert day/date)?" without any information. "It's a trap—and highly passive aggressive." My pal Lisa King, a former operating room nurse, has some advice: immediately toss back with "Why do you ask?"

An index card with "WHY DO YOU ASK?" bold-printed in red could, in fact, prove useful.

But don't take this personally. I've heard that you're terribly good at conversation. Everybody says so—well, almost everybody. You might not want to hear this, but ...

A wall is easier to build than to tear down

By JOHN CRISP
Tribune News Service

John M. Crisp lives in Georgetown, Texas, and can be reached at jcrispcolumns@gmail.com.

The budgetary stalemate that has partially shut down the government persists, prolonged by the tension between two equally preposterous ideas that pull at each other from distant poles.

The first is that the Democrats favor so-called open borders, across which immigrants, criminals, terrorists and drugs flow unimpeded. No rational Democrat defends this imaginary position. It was created by President Donald Trump for political purposes.

At the other pole is the equally fanciful border wall that Trump made a central feature of his bid for the presidency. The specifics varied considerably during the campaign, but the most extreme version reached 65 feet in height for the entire length of our 2000-mile southern border.

Cost estimates for Trump's wall were as outrageous as its proposed height and source of funding. Mexico, of course, was never going to pay for it.

So here we are: Democrats are accused of holding a position—open borders—that no reasonable citizen would accept, and Trump is still committed to something that can be called a "wall," even if it's only the intermittent fencing that has been used along the border for decades.

Who knows how this will turn out? But it's probably worth remembering why a wall that is anything close to the one that helped Donald Trump get elected is such a bad idea.

Critics of a border wall have pointed out its ineffectiveness. One calls it a 5th-century solution to a 21st-century problem. Others point out that a majority—as much as 66 percent, according to the Center for Migration Studies—of those who join the undocumented population each year overstay a valid visa and thus would be unaffected by a wall.

In addition to its enormous expense, the kind of wall that Trump ran on would have to be built in a more or less straight line on this side of a very crooked river, effectively relinquishing thousands of acres of American territory into a useless no man's land. The impact on the animals that frequently cross the river would be significant. There are problems of right of way and the ongoing costs of maintenance. And so on.

But a wall's impact on the border would be psychological and emotional as well as physical. A wall even half as formidable as the one that Trump imagines is a stark repudiation of more than 130 million Mexicans, nearly all of whom are not criminals, rapists or terrorists. Further, it would demonstrate contempt for the reliable trading partner and ally that Mexico has been for decades, as well as for the important role that Mexican labor—legal and illegal—plays in our economy.

This is what poet Robert Frost was talking about in "Mending Wall," where he says that before building a wall, we should ask "to whom I was like to give offense."

Mexico has its problems, but they are probably less permanent than the kind of wall that Trump has in mind. Trump will be president for somewhere between one and six more years. But the stark concrete barrier that so excited Trump's base during the campaign will be incredibly permanent.

And the psychological and emotional offense that such a wall will commit against one of our most reliable allies will be just as permanent, enduring long after Trump is gone.

Should we care? My Tea Party neighbor down the street says that we should not care in the least what other nations think of us. I'm not so sure. Someday we may really need a friendly Mexico.

And in 20, 40 or 60 years, when Americans may change their minds about other countries, a near-permanent concrete wall—with all its psychological and emotional damage—may still stand between us and Mexico.

Bridges are easier to burn than to build. Walls are different. They're hard enough to build, but they're even harder to tear down.

Democrats should resist the pressure to placate Trump with $5 billion to construct even a part of a very bad idea.

SOCIAL

From Page 10

dermine democracy. It's not just Russia. It's happening all over the world. And we know that even after the social media giant Facebook became aware that it was being used in such a manner, it was slow to react, even as its machine-learning algorithms continued to serve people not the best information, but rather the information most likely to keep them on Facebook, clicking one more time, watching one more ad.

Twitter, meanwhile, is a land of bots and trolls that even the most carefully curated feed will struggle to keep out and where a 280-character limit promises not reason and depth, but rather appeals to shallow emotion.

By now, we know the social media giants are not going to change. Their revenue model is too tied to keeping us online, collecting our personal data and preferences and then selling them to all comers—often without consent.

Congress needs to address social media companies' position as the major publishers of our age. It also needs to address how internet companies use and sell personal data. Our sense of politics is that if change is to come, it has to bubble up from the people. The politicians in Washington will spend their time watching the polls or being pulled aside by lobbyists for the internet giants.

It will be up to us as Americans to ask hard questions about who we are and how we want to relate to one another. In 2019, we have to be willing to treat one another online as neighbors and fellow citizens. We have to be willing to hear one another out and to respond not from our gut but from our minds — and then support leaders who emulate such behavior.

We also need to be willing to hold social media accountable for the material it spreads, for how it treats our personal data as a commodity and for the division it so often sows among us. That can mean speaking up about it, or reducing the frequency we use it or saying goodbye to certain sites altogether in hopes that more ethical companies will replace them.

The old saying "we are what we eat" applies here. We are what we consume. And with social media, that consumption is too often unhealthy. Let's stop this year and do something about it.

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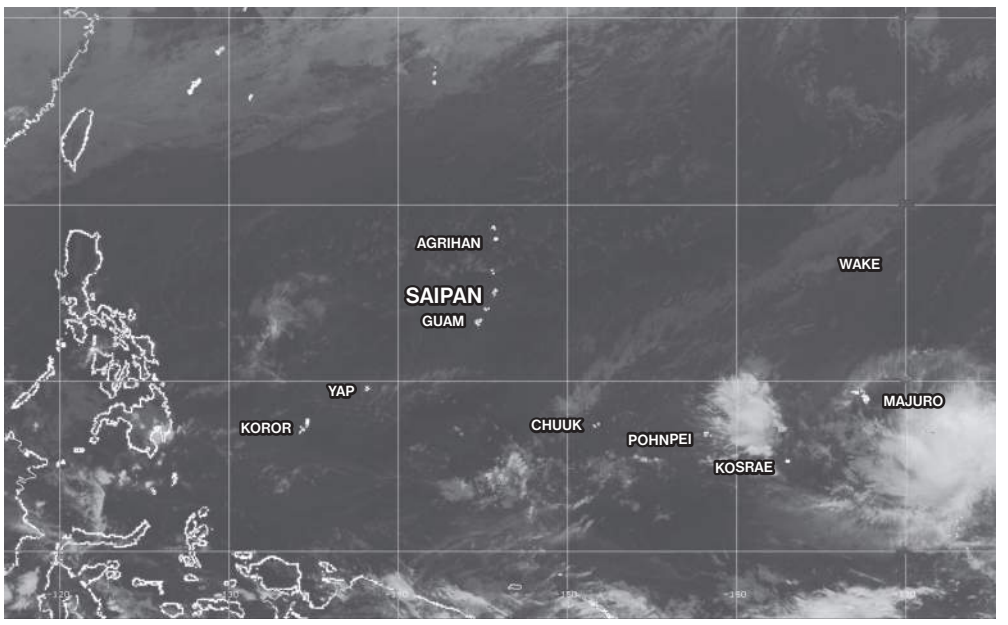
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
88° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:06 AM, SUNDAY, JANUARY 6, 2019

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Fairly quiet weather is expected through midweek, with a fairly dry northeast trade wind pattern. Otherwise, the next possibility of any significant weather will come Friday into the weekend when what is now Tropical Depression 01W moves south of Guam and south of 10N. Based on the current guidance and latest track, which still has quite a bit of uncertainty, it does appear that we would at least see showers over the weekend.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Windy	85° / 78°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	84° / 77°
Yap	Showers	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Kosrae	Showers	85° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	79° / 57°
Beijing	Sunny	37° / 12°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	70° / 63°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	82° / 70°
London	Showers	45° / 37°
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	65° / 49°
Manila	Sunny	84° / 73°
Melbourne	Showers	79° / 57°
Miami	Sunny	77° / 69°
New York	Showers	41° / 38°
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	52° / 37°
Paris	Cloudy	45° / 36°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	43° / 25°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	54° / 34°
Salem	Mostly Sunny	68° / 52°
San Francisco	Showers	57° / 50°
Seoul	Sunny	28° / 10°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	54° / 37°
Washington, DC	Cloudy	47° / 44°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
2:33 AM	HIGH TIDE	-0.35
9:36 AM	LOW TIDE	1.85
3:03 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.20
7:39 PM	LOW TIDE	1.83

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:44 AM	6:01 PM
Tuesday	6:45 AM	6:01 PM
Wednesday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM
Thursday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM
Friday	6:45 AM	6:03 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	7:25 AM	7:00 PM	-
Tuesday	8:11 AM	7:50 PM	-
Wednesday	8:45 AM	8:39 PM	-
Thursday	9:35 AM	9:27 PM	-
Friday	10:14 AM	10:15 PM	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 20, 2018

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily
UA105	4:45pm	5:25pm	2, 4

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:15am	6:30am	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:

TW9308	1:10am	4:10am	3, 4
TW308	1:35am	5:20am	Daily
TW9308	3:20am	6:30am	2
TW9308	3:25am	6:30am	5
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U86486:10am		8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:15am	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA117/183 via GUM	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA117/193 GUM-ROR	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:40pm	2 via GUM
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA117/159	9:15am	11:00pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA105/159	4:45pm	11:00pm	2, 4 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA104	3:00pm	3:41pm	2, 4

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35pm	2:00am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3452	10:05pm	2:00am+1	1

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:

TW9307	6:30pm	12:10am+1	2, 3
TW307	7:00pm	12:35am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
TW307	7:05pm	12:35am+1	1
TW9307	9:00pm	2:20am+1	1
TW9307	9:05pm	:25am+1	4
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
PR110/UA174	10:05pm	8:11am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/174	10:30pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/174	11:45pm	8:11am+1	2, 4 via GUM
UA116/174	11:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

Trump says shutdown could last for 'months or even years'

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump declared Friday he could keep parts of the government shut down for "months or even years" as he and Democratic leaders failed in a second closed-door meeting to resolve his demand for billions of dollars for a border wall with Mexico. They did agree to a new round of weekend talks between staff members and White House officials.

Trump met in the White House Situation Room with congressional leaders from both parties as the shutdown hit the two-week mark amid an impasse over his wall demands. Democrats emerged from the roughly two-hour meeting, which both sides said was contentious at times, to report little if any progress.

■■■

AP

President Donald Trump speaks in the Rose Garden of the White House in Washington after a meeting with Congressional leaders on border security as the government shutdown continues Friday, Jan. 4, 2019, in Washington.

Trump said he could declare a national emergency to build the wall without congressional approval, but would first try a "negotiated process." Trump previously described the situation at the border as a "national emergency" before he dispatched active-duty troops in what critics described as a pre-election stunt.

Trump also said the hundreds of thousands of federal workers who are furloughed or working without pay would want him to "keep going" and fight for border security. Asked how people would manage without a financial safety net, he declared: "The safety net is going to be having a strong border because we're going to be safe."

Democrats, on the other hand, spoke of families unable to pay bills and called on Trump to reopen the government while negotiations continue. Senate Democratic Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said, "It's very hard to see how progress will be made unless they open up the government."

Friday's White House meeting with Trump included eight congressional leaders — the top two Democrats and Republicans of both chambers. People familiar with the session but not authorized to speak publicly described Trump as holding forth at length on a range of subjects but said he made clear he was firm in his demand for $5.6 billion in wall funding and in rejecting the Democrats' request to reopen the government.

Trump confirmed that he privately told Democrats the shutdown could drag on for months or years, though he said he hoped it wouldn't last that long. Said Trump: "I hope it doesn't go on even beyond a few more days."

House Democrats muscled through legislation Thursday night to fund the government but not Trump's proposed wall. However, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has said those measures are non-starters on his side of the Capitol without the president's support.

A variety of strategies are being floated inside and outside the White House, among them trading wall funding for a deal on immigrants brought to the country as young people and now here illegally, or using a national emergency declaration to build the wall. While Trump made clear during his press conference that talk on DACA (the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program) would have to wait and that he was trying to negotiate with Congress on the wall, the conversations underscored rising Republican anxiety about just how to exit the shutdown.

NEW YORK (AP)—The federal agency tasked with guaranteeing U.S. airport security acknowledged an increase in the number of its employees calling off work during the partial government shutdown .

Employees of the Transportation Security Administration are expected to work without pay during the shutdown because their jobs are considered essential.

The TSA said in a statement Friday that call outs that began over the holiday period have increased. The agency did not say how many of its employees have called out, but it said the call outs have had "minimal impact given that there are 51,739 employees supporting the screening process." The statement said wait times "may be affected" but so far "remain well within TSA standards."

"TSA is closely monitoring the situation," the agency statement said. "Security effectiveness will not be compromised."

■■■

The standoff also prompted economic jitters and anxiety among some in Trump's own party. But he appeared in the Rose Garden to frame the upcoming weekend talks as progress, while making clear he would not reopen the government.

"We won't be opening until it's solved," Trump said. "I don't call it a shutdown. I call it doing what you have to do for the benefit and the safety of our country."

Mexico launches plan to stimulate US border economy

MEXICO CITY (AP)—President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador launched an ambitious plan Saturday to stimulate economic activity on the Mexican side of the U.S.-Mexico border, reinforcing his country's commitment to manufacturing and trade despite recent U.S. threats to close the border entirely.

Mexico will slash income and corporate taxes to 20 percent from 30 percent for 43 municipalities in six states just south of the U.S., while halving to 8 percent the value-added tax in the region. Business leaders and union representatives have also agreed to double the minimum wage along the border, to 176.2 pesos a day, the equivalent of $9.07 at current exchange rates.

Lopez Obrador, who took office on Dec. 1, said the idea is to stoke wage and job growth via fiscal incentives and productivity gains. U.S. President Donald Trump has repeatedly complained that low wages in Mexico lure jobs from the U.S. Mexico committed to boost wages during last year's negotiations to retool its free trade agreement with the U.S. and Canada.

Speaking from Ciudad Juarez, a manufacturing hub south of El Paso, Texas, Lopez Obrador said Saturday he agrees with Trump that Mexican wages "should improve." He decried, for instance, that Mexican auto workers earn a fraction of what their U.S. counterparts take home, topping out at just $3 an hour versus a typical wage of $23 an hour in the U.S.

Yet the economic plan comes at a delicate moment for the border region. Trump threatened as recently as last week to close the U.S.-Mexico border "entirely" if Democrats refuse to allot $5.6 billion to expand the wall that separates the two countries.

Economy Minister Graciela Marquez noted Saturday that the border region targeted for economic stimulus accounts for 7.5 percent of Mexico's gross domestic product. And in recent years, she said, the 43 municipalities included in the plan have boasted combined economic growth of 3.1 percent, above the national average of 2.6 percent for the six years through 2017.

Much of that robustness owes to trade and proximity with the U.S., the world's biggest economy.

"We have to take advantage of this locomotive that we have on the other side of the border," she said.

Marquez expressed optimism that the stimulus plan will direct more Mexican and foreign investment into the border region. The plan for the border region is part of what Lopez Obrador calls "curtains of development" to shore up different corridors of the country so that Mexicans stay rather than migrating in search of better economic prospects.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Bluefin goes for $3M at 1st 2019 sale at Tokyo market

TOKYO (AP)—A 612-pound (278-kilogram) bluefin tuna sold for a record 333.6 million yen ($3 million) at the first auction of 2019, after Tokyo's famed Tsukiji market was moved to a new site on the city's waterfront. The winning bid for the prized but threatened species at the predawn auction Saturday was more than double the 2013 annual New Year auction. It was paid by Kiyomura Corp., whose owner, Kiyoshi Kimura, runs the Sushi Zanmai chain. Kimura has often won the annual auction in the past. Japanese broadcaster NHK showed a beaming Kimura saying that he was surprised by the high price of tuna this year. But he added, "The quality of the tuna I bought is the best." The auction prices are way above usual for bluefin tuna. The fish normally sells for up to $40 a pound ($88 a kilogram), but the price rises to over $200 a pound near the year's end, especially for prized catches from Oma in northern Japan.

Passengers angry after flight to Greece diverted to Romania

THESSALONIKI, Greece (AP)—For about 200 passengers, the flight from London to Thessaloniki in northern Greece took almost 24 hours. Foggy conditions in Thessaloniki airport led Ryanair to divert the flight from London Stansted Airport to the city of Timisoara in western Romania, late Friday. Many passengers, already grumbling that the diversion was not made to an airport closer to their destination were outraged when the company offered buses to take them the 770-kilometer (480-mile) distance in freezing weather. Ryanair has scheduled flights to Timisoara, as well as Athens, Greece, and some passengers felt that the decision to divert to the Romanian city was made on the basis of minimizing costs. "They could have landed us at a Greek airport," flight passenger Sakis Papadopoulos, 36, told The Associated Press.

Overheated e-cigarette battery causes small fire on flight

CHICAGO (AP)—American Airlines says a passenger's electronic cigarette caused a small fire on a flight from Las Vegas to Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. American Airlines spokeswoman Leslie Scott says the e-cigarette's battery overheated shortly after Flight 168 landed Friday night. Scott says flight attendants stamped out the fire. No one was injured. The 138 passengers and crew of six taxied to a gate. The U.S. Transportation Department has banned e-cigarettes from checked bags because of the potential for them to catch fire. Passengers may put then in carry-on bags, but cannot use them aboard planes. Scott says the incident was reported to the Federal Aviation Administration, which tracks such events.

Nation

3 killed, 4 injured in CA bowling alley shooting

TORRANCE, Calif. (AP)—Three men were fatally shot late Friday and four injured when a brawl at a popular Los Angeles-area bowling alley and karaoke bar erupted into gunfire that had terrified patrons, some children, running for their lives.

Police in the coastal city of Torrance responded shortly after midnight to calls of shots fired at the Gable House Bowl. They found seven people with gunshot wounds.

Three men were pronounced dead at the scene and two were taken to a hospital, Sgt. Ronald Harris said. Two other men were struck by gunfire but "opted to seek their own medical attention."

Authorities have not identified the victims nor suspects or released details about what led to the shooting. Witnesses said it stemmed from a fight between two large groups.

Dwayne Edwards, 60, of Los Angeles, said he received a call from his nephew that his 28-year-old son, Astin Edwards, was one of those killed. His nephew told him his son was attempting to break up a fight when a gunman "just started unloading."

"I'm thinking this is a dream and I'll wake up," Edwards told the Orange County Register. "He was a good kid. I don't understand it."

A grieving mother told KABC-7 her 28-year-old son, Robert Meekins, was also trying to break up the fight and that Meekins and Astin Edwards were friends.

"They were friends, so I know he probably jumped in and helped Astin and whoever he was with ... but I don't think my son deserves to die," Anglean Hubbard said.

"My son was a loving person. He loved life, he loved his son, and he loved his family. Nobody can imagine what I'm going through right now," Hubbard said.

The third victim was 20-year-old Michael Radford, his sister Latrice Dumas told the Torrance Daily Breeze.

"He was happy. He was always a protector," Dumas said. "That's how he got into this, he was trying to protect others."

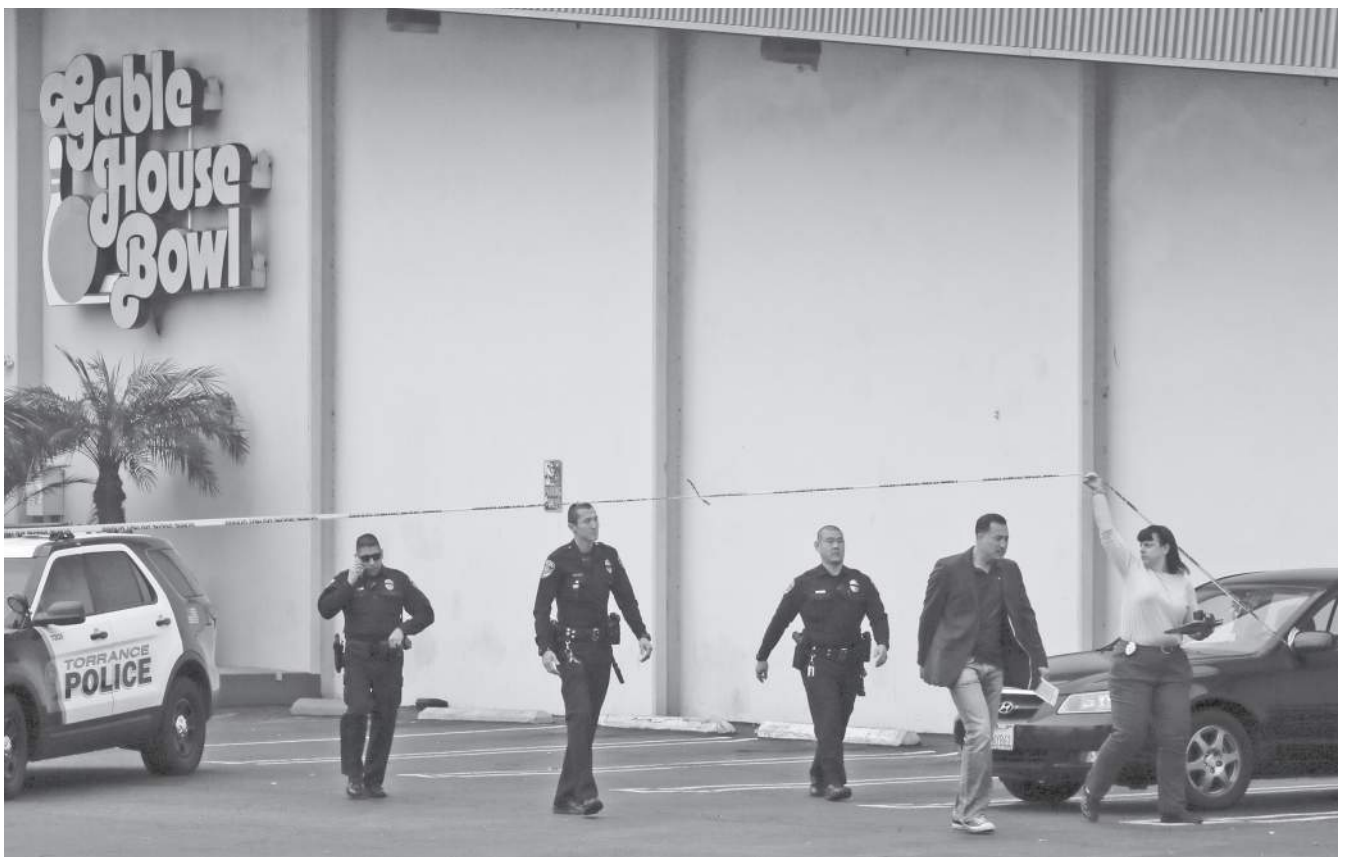
Wes Hamad, a 29-year-old Torrance resident, said he was at the bowling alley with his 13-year-old niece and cousin when he saw a "huge fight" break out. Hamad said the brawl, which lasted about five minutes, blocked the entrance and spiraled into "complete chaos."

"I grabbed my niece and started running toward the far end of the bowling alley," he said. "As we were running, we heard 15 shots."

As he was leaving, Hamad said he saw a woman weeping over a man who was had gunshot wounds to his head and neck.

Damone Thomas was in the karaoke section of the bowling alley, a regular stop for him and his friends after work on Fridays, when people ran in saying there was a shooting. The 30-year-old Los Angeles resident said his friend flipped a table to shield them as they heard gunshots.

Thomas said he didn't feel scared because he was "just trying to survive." But when he was driving home, he said he realized how traumatic the situation was and said he wasn't been able to fall asleep.



AP

Torrance Police Department investigators walk towards waiting family members, as officers confirm fatalities in a shooting incident at the Gable House Bowl in Torrance, Calif., Saturday, Jan. 5, 2019.

Woman in vegetative state for decade reportedly gives birth

PHOENIX (AP)—A woman said to have been in a vegetative state for at least a decade at a private health care facility in Phoenix reportedly gave birth recently, triggering a police investigation and reviews by state agencies in a situation that the state governor's office called "deeply troubling.'"

Azfamily.com, a news website for television stations KPHO and KTVK, first reported late Thursday that, according to sources not identified by the website, a woman gave birth Dec. 29 living at a Hacienda HealthCare facility where the staff was unaware that she was pregnant.

Two other Phoenix television stations later aired similar reports.

According to some reports, the woman was a victim of a near-drowning more than 10 years ago. Her identity hasn't been reported, and it's not known if she has family or a guardian.

Sources quoted in the reports said the woman was heard to be moaning and that the baby's head was starting to emerge when a nurse came in.

"None of the staff were aware that she was pregnant until she was pretty much giving birth," azfamily.com quoted a source familiar with the situation as saying. That person said the baby was said to be alive and healthy.

Following the azfamily.com report, Hacienda Health Care and state officials issued brief statements about the situation, expressing concern and describing reviews being conducted and steps being taken. But they did not specifically confirm the reported pregnancy and birth.

A Phoenix Police Department spokesman, Sgt. Tommy Thompson, said only that the "the matter is under investigation." He declined to confirm whether the investigation involved a possible sex crime or elaborate on the circumstances that prompted the investigation.

Hacienda said it in a statement it was cooperating with law enforcement and reviewing its security protocols after becoming aware of a "deeply disturbing incident and "an unprecedented matter."

"While federal and state privacy laws prohibit us from publicly discussing a patient's health or case, Hacienda has and will continue to cooperate fully with law enforcement and all the relevant regulatory agencies regarding this matter," Hacienda said in its statement.

Hacienda's website said it serves infants, children and young adults who are "medically fragile" or have developmental disabilities.

Gov. Doug Ducey's office said Ducey was briefed on the "deeply troubling" reports as soon as the office learned of them and that state agencies "immediately began taking every measure to protect patient safety."

According to the Arizona Department of Health Services, an agency that regulates health care facilities, the 60-bed Hacienda facility was required to tighten security procedures to protect patients in wake of the report.

"We are aware of this situation and are actively working with local law enforcement in their criminal investigation," the department said in a statement.

The state Department of Economic Security, a social-service agency whose functions include serving disabled people, said it performed health and safety checks on all of the residents at the Hacienda facility after the birth was reported and was working with police on their investigation.

ACROSS THE NATION

Nevada inmate whose execution called off found dead in cell

LAS VEGAS (AP)—A twice-convicted murderer who declared he wanted to die and who Nevada officials said tried several times to kill himself after two scheduled lethal injections were postponed has been found dead from an apparent hanging, officials said Saturday. Scott Raymond Dozier, 48, was found unresponsive in his solo death-row cell at the state's maximum-security prison in Ely, Department of Corrections spokeswoman Brooke Santina told The Associated Press. Dozier's lawyer, Thomas Ericsson, declined to comment immediately. Dozier had said repeatedly he wanted to die rather than live the rest of his life in prison. "I've been very clear about my desire to be executed ... even if suffering is inevitable," Dozier said in a handwritten note to a state court judge who postponed his execution in November 2017 over concerns the untried drug regimen could leave him suffocating, conscious and unable to move. "Just get it done, just do it effectively and stop fighting about it," the frustrated inmate told The Associated Press in a telephone interview last August, a month after a different judge stopped his execution at nearly the final hour.

'Persons of interest' questioned in death of Jazmine Barnes

HOUSTON (AP)—Authorities in Texas say "persons of interest" are being interviewed in the investigation into the shooting death of a 7-year-old black girl. Jazmine Barnes was shot and killed in Houston on Dec. 30 after investigators say a suspect pulled alongside the car the girl was riding in with her family and fired into the vehicle. The shooting occurred as the family was heading to a store. The Harris County Sheriff's Office posted on Twitter late Saturday that persons of interest are being questioned, and that the investigation has "taken a new direction." The sheriff's office did not elaborate. Earlier Saturday, hundreds of people gathered at a rally for the girl near where the shooting happened. Jazmine's family has said they believe the shooting was racially motivated.

Arkansas sheriff's deputy fired after shooting small dog

CONWAY, Ark. (AP)—A sheriff's office in central Arkansas has fired a deputy who was captured on video shooting and wounding a small dog while on duty. Faulkner County Sheriff Tim Ryals said on the office's Facebook page Saturday that Deputy Keenan Wallace was "relieved of his duties" one day after the incident in Conway, about 25 miles north of Little Rock. The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette reports Wallace was responding to a call Friday evening when the dog, named Reese's, was shot in the face. An earlier statement from the sheriff's office said the dog was aggressive. Doug Canady, who recorded the shooting, tells the newspaper he took Reese's to a veterinarian and that the dog has a broken jaw. Ryals says prosecutors are reviewing the case.

Asia

Chinese rover powers up devices in pioneering moon mission

BEIJING (AP)—All systems are go as a Chinese spacecraft and rover power up their observation equipment after making a first-ever landing on the far side of the moon, the Chinese National Space Administration said.

The Jade Rabbit 2 rover has succeeded in establishing a digital transmission link with a relay satellite that sends data back to the Beijing control center, the space agency said in a posting late Friday on its website.

The rover's radar and panoramic camera have been activated and are working normally, it said. A photo released by the agency showed the rover stopped at a point not far from where the Chang'e 4 spacecraft touched down Thursday.

Chang'e 4, named after a Chinese moon goddess, is the first craft to make a soft landing on the moon's far side, which faces away from Earth. Previous landings, including one by China's Chang'e 3 in 2013, have been on the near side.

After sending the rover off from a ramp, the spacecraft deployed three 5-meter (16-foot) low-frequency radio antennas, the Chinese space agency said. Chang'e 4 also has sent back images taken with a topographical camera.

Researchers hope that low-frequency observations of the cosmos from the far side, where radio signals from Earth are blocked by the moon, will help scientists learn more about the early days of the solar system and even the birth of the universe's first stars.

Harvard University astronomer Avi Loeb noted, however, that the relay satellite needed to send back information from the far side also contaminates the sky.

"As long as we keep it clean of radio interference, the far side of the moon is very good for radio astronomy," he said.

The far side has been observed many times from lunar orbits, but never explored on the surface. It is popularly called the "dark side" because it can't be seen from Earth and is relatively unknown, not because it lacks sunlight.

"It's just the far side, it can be either dark or light," Loeb said, depending on the time of day.

The pioneering landing highlights China's ambitions to rival the U.S., Russia and Europe in space. Both China's space community and public have taken pride in the accomplishment, with some drawing comparisons to the United States.

China's space program lags America's, but has made great strides in the past 15 years, including manned flights and a space laboratory that is seen as a precursor to plans for a space station.

AP

In this photo provided on Thursday, Jan. 3, 2019, by China National Space Administration via Xinhua News Agency, Yutu-2, China's lunar rover, leaves wheel marks after leaving the lander that touched down on the surface of the far side of the moon.

China says US travel advisory 'cannot stand up to scrutiny'

BEIJING (AP)—China on Friday rebutted a U.S. travel advisory that urges American nationals to "exercise increased caution" when travelling in the Communist Party-ruled country.

The advisory, which warns of the potential for arbitrary detentions, "cannot stand up to scrutiny," said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang, who noted that 2.3 million Americans visited China between January and November 2018.

"I think this figure speaks volumes for the security condition in China," Lu said, adding that it far outnumbers the number of Chinese people visiting the U.S. "The U.S., however, has recently used various excuses to conduct gratuitous inspections and create obstacles for Chinese citizens entering the U.S."

The spokesman did not mention specific instances in which Chinese citizens encountered difficulty entering the U.S. An American official told the AP last May that Chinese graduate students studying in fields like robotics and aviation in the U.S. would be limited to one-year visas, while Chinese citizens seeking visas to work for companies on a U.S. Commerce Department list would need special clearance.

An updated U.S. State Department notice warns that China sometimes arbitrarily detains U.S. citizens or prevents them from leaving the country. The notice says the "exit bans" are imposed to compel Americans to facilitate government investigations or resolve business disputes. U.S. citizens of Chinese heritage may be subject to additional scrutiny, it adds.

"U.S. citizens may be subjected to prolonged interrogations and extended detention for reasons related to 'state security,'" the advisory says. "Security personnel may detain and/or deport U.S. citizens for sending private electronic messages critical of the Chinese government."

The notice is largely the same as one released a year ago, with the addition of a paragraph noting security checks and increased police presence in the Xinjiang and Tibet regions.

ASIAN BRIEFS

India declares tycoon Mallya a 'fugitive economic offender'

NEW DELHI (AP)—An Indian court on Saturday declared tycoon Vijay Mallya a "fugitive economic offender," a ruling that empowers authorities to confiscate his properties and other assets. Judge M.S. Azmi's decision came less than a month after a British Court ruled that the 62-year-old Mallya should be extradited to India to face financial fraud allegations. Mallya remains free on bail in London and can appeal the ruling. Mallya, who left India in 2016, is accused of money laundering and cheating Indian banks out of hundreds of millions of dollars. He has denied wrongdoing. He was declared a fugitive economic offender under a new Indian law that applies to a person accused of financial fraud of over 1 billion rupees ($14.2 million) and who has fled India to avoid prosecution. Mallya, who in 1983 became chairman of an alcohol company once led by his father, was a leading figure among India's business elite. He launched Kingfisher Airlines and had an ownership stake in India's Formula One racing team.

Myanmar government says Rakhine rebels kill 13 policemen

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Thirteen policemen were killed and nine injured in early morning attacks Friday on police outposts in Myanmar's Rakhine state by the insurgent Arakan Army, state media reported. The Arakan Army is a rebel group seeking autonomy for Rakhine state from Myanmar's central government. It has no links with the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, a Muslim insurgent group whose similar attacks in 2017 sparked a bloody government counter-insurgency campaign against the area's Muslim Rohingya minority, driving more than 700,000 to flee to neighboring Bangladesh. While the Muslim ARSA group has become virtually inactive, the Arakan Army, which is aligned with the state's Buddhist population, has taken advantage of the area's instability to increase its military activities after training its guerrillas in regions controlled by other insurgent groups, including the Kachin in northern Myanmar. There has been an upsurge in sporadic fighting between the Arakan Army and government forces since last month. The state Myanmar News Agency said a total of 250 members of the Arakan Army took part in the attacks on three outposts in Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships. While such numbers are sometimes inflated by the defenders, the rebel group is generally estimated to have several thousand well-armed and organized uniformed members, in contrast to the ragtag ARSA.

Afghan official says insurgents stormed checkpoint, 7 killed

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—An Afghan official says at least seven border police officers were killed when their checkpoint came under attack by insurgents in southern Kandahar province. Aziz Ahmad Azizi, spokesman for the provincial governor in Kandahar, says four other officers were wounded in the attack in the Spin Bolduk district. He added that 16 insurgents were killed and 11 others wounded in an ensuing battle that took place over several hours late Friday. The Taliban did not immediately comment on the attack but they have been carrying out near-daily attacks targeting Afghan forces, despite stepped-up efforts by the United States to find a negotiated end to the country's 17-year war.

World

Venezuela's congress names new leader, vows to battle Maduro

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Venezuela's opposition-controlled congress opened its first session of the year Saturday, installing a fresh-faced leader who struck a defiant tone and vowed to take up the battle against socialist President Nicolas Maduro.

Juan Guaido, 35, assumes the presidency of a National Assembly stripped of power by Maduro, whose government is blamed for leading the once-wealthy oil nation into a historic political and humanitarian crisis.

Speaking to legislators, Guaido named off several opposition politicians and opponents of Maduro's government who have been jailed, driven into exile or killed. He said desperation has forced masses of citizens to flee abroad looking for work.

"We are under an oppressive system," he said. "It's not just that — it is miserable."

Tall and youthful, Guaido represents the next generation of Venezuelan political opposition, taking up the assembly's leadership following 74-year-old Omar Barboza.

Guaido is an industrial engineer and former student leader from the same political party as Leopoldo Lopez, Venezuela's most popular opposition leader under house arrest. Government opponents consider him a political prisoner.

Guaido called Maduro a dictator whose legitimacy has run out. Venezuela is living a "dark but transitional" moment of its history, he said, adding that among its first acts congress will create a transitional body to restore constitutional order, but he offered no details.

He addressed a hall filled only with opposition lawmakers as the government loyalists have long boycotted any sessions, saying the National Assembly has itself overstepped its authority.

However, roughly 20 foreign diplomats from the United States, Canada, Japan, Italy and Germany attended the assembly's inaugural session in a show of solidarity.

"The National Assembly should inspire hope in the Venezuelan people for a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic future, even as the corrupt and authoritarian Maduro regime and its allies seek to deny Venezuelans that right," the State Department said in a statement. It added: "Every nation must take strong action to help the Venezuelan people reclaim their democracy."

The assembly opened days before Maduro's inauguration to a second, six-year term widely condemned as illegitimate after he declared victory in the May 20 election that many foreign powers considered a sham.

Venezuela's socialist party boss Diosdado Cabello said Saturday that Maduro will be sworn in on Jan. 10 before the Supreme Court, which is stacked with government loyalists. This defies the constitution that requires a president take the oath before the National Assembly.

As international pressure mounts, a dozen Latin American countries and Canada on Friday urged Maduro to cede power and hand it over to congress until a valid president is elected.

Venezuelan officials accuse the coalition of taking orders directly from U.S. President Donald Trump, who they frequently accuse of spearheading an economic war against Venezuela.

"Those of us here are fighting every day to restore democracy," Guaido said. "We want the protection of the rule of law. We want the Venezuelans to be protected, because we believe in life."

AP

Incoming parliamentary president Juan Guaido, left, takes a selfie photo with his wife Fabiana Rosales and his daughter Miranda Guaido upon his arrival to swear in the new board of the National Assembly in Caracas, Venezuela, Saturday, Jan. 5, 2019.

Syrian Kurds and government discuss post-US withdrawal

BEIRUT (AP)—Talks are ongoing between the Syrian government in Damascus and Kurdish officials to reach a deal on how to fill the gap following the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the country, a Syrian Kurdish official said Saturday.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the talks' secrecy, said Syrian Kurdish officials have visited Russia which is a main backer of the Syrian government. He added that Russia supports the talks between the government and the Kurdish-led militia that control nearly a third of the country.

President Donald Trump announced in mid-December that the U.S. will withdraw all of its 2,000 forces in Syria. Trump's move has raised fears over clearing the way for a Turkish assault on Kurdish fighters in Syria who fought alongside American troops against Islamic State group extremists. Turkey considers the Kurdish People's Protection Units, or YPG, a terrorist group linked to an insurgency within its own borders.

The main U.S.-backed Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces has expressed concerns over the planned withdrawal as Turkey has threatened to launch a military operation against Kurdish fighters in Syria.

The Kurdish official said "discussions are ongoing and the atmosphere is positive." He said that an understanding has been reached to "face any force that wants to occupy Syria especially in the north."

The official told The Associated Press that Russia is playing a "positive role" in discussing agreements that could be reached between the Kurds and the government. He gave no further details saying that discussions are still ongoing.

"There are hopes to reach a deal that pleases both sides as we are all Syrians," he said.

Ibrahim Hamidi, a journalist who covers Syrian affairs for the Saudi-owned newspaper Asharq Al-Awsat, wrote in a report published Saturday that the top commander of the YPG, Sipan Hemo, secretly visited Damascus and Moscow where he offered "a secret deal" that would include handing over border points to the Syrian government in return for accepting a Kurdish local administration with Russia as a guarantor.

The SDF, of which the YPG forms the backbone, controls areas along the border with Turkey in the north and Iraq in the northeast.

Hamidi added that the offer aims to reach "understandings to fill the gap following the American withdrawal and to cut the road for Turkish intervention."

U.S. national security adviser John Bolton, who is currently in Israel, is scheduled to later visit Turkey along with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Joseph Dunford. In meetings with Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and other officials, they are expected to warn against an offensive targeting the Kurdish fighters in Syria.

In the northern province of Aleppo, al-Qaida-linked Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, Arabic for Levant Liberation Committee, or HTS, captured more than a dozen villages from Turkey-backed opposition fighters.

Overnight, HTS shelled western neighborhoods of the northern city Aleppo, Syria's largest, triggering Russian airstrikes on the areas recently captured by the militants, according to state media and opposition activists.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and the Aleppo Media Center, an activist collective, said a child and his father were killed in the Russian airstrikes.

Ukrainian Orthodox Church breaks away from Russian influence

ISTANBUL (AP)—An independent Ukrainian Orthodox church was created at a signing ceremony in Turkey on Saturday, formalizing a split with the Russian church it had been tied to since 1686.

The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I, signed the "Tomos" in Istanbul in front of clerics and Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, forming the Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

It forces Ukrainian clerics to pick sides between the Moscow-backed Ukrainian churches and the new church as fighting persists in eastern Ukraine between government forces and Russia-backed rebels.

"The pious Ukrainian people have awaited this blessed day for seven entire centuries," Bartholomew I said in his address.

The patriarch, considered "first among equals" in Orthodox Christianity, said Ukrainians could now enjoy "the sacred gift of emancipation, independence and self-governance, becoming free from every external reliance and intervention."

Poroshenko thanked Bartholomew I "for the courage to make this historic decision" and said that "among the 15 stars of the Orthodox churches of the world a Ukrainian star has appeared," referring to the updated number of churches that don't answer to an external authority.

Last month, Ukrainian Orthodox leaders approved the creation of a new, unified church split from the Moscow Patriarchate and elected 39-year-old Metropolitan Epiphanius I to lead it.

Bartholomew I's decision in October to grant the Ukrainian church "autocephaly," or independence, infuriated Moscow and the Russian church severed ties with Istanbul, the center of the Orthodox world.

Criticism continued Saturday when a spokesman for the Russia-affiliated church in Ukraine, Vasily Anisimov, said, "We consider these actions to be anti-canonical ... This action will not bring anything to Ukraine except trouble, separation and sin," according to Russian state news agency RIA-Novosti.

Kiev has been pushing for a church free from Moscow's influence, which intensified after Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea and amid the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Poroshenko, president since 2014, has pushed for the creation of the church as he campaigns for a March 31 election. Though the church is not formally part of the state, it is closely tied. Recent opinion polls suggest he is in second or third place in the race.

Poroshenko met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan before the ceremony.

Focus

National parks

struggle to stay open, safe during shutdown

By BRADY McCOMBS and JOHN FLESHER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nonprofits, businesses and state governments nationwide are putting up money and volunteer hours in a battle to keep national parks safe and clean for visitors as the partial U.S. government shutdown lingers.

But such makeshift arrangements haven't prevented some parks from closing and others from being inundated with trash. Support groups say donations of money and time could run short if the budget impasse between President Donald Trump and congressional Democrats lasts much longer. Some are calling for parks to close for the duration of the standoff, which Trump said Friday could last "months or even years."

"Our national parks deserve better than an improvised patchwork of emergency care," Diane Regas, CEO of the Trust for Public Lands, said in a letter to Trump that noted reports of theft, poaching and accumulating piles of garbage and human waste. "They need robust funding and full-time protection, or they should be closed."

Ryan Zinke, who recently stepped down under fire as Interior Department secretary, had ordered many national parks to stay open, saying visitors should not be penalized for the political feud over a border wall with Mexico. During an interview with The Associated Press, Zinke said visitors should take action to keep parks clean.

"Grab a trash bag and take some trash out with you," he said. "In order to keep them open, everybody has to pitch in."

The park service has reached deals with more than 60 partner groups, concessionaires and states to handle trash removal, restroom cleanup and other basic tasks at more than 40 parks — and, in a few cases, to keep park staffers on the job, spokesman Jeremy Barnum said Friday.

The state of New York was footing the bill to operate the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island National Monument, while a private company donated portable toilets at several locations on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The National Park Foundation took charge of repairing and operating the National Christmas Tree.

Another nonprofit donated more than $50,000 to keep 15 rangers temporarily on the job at Great Smoky Mountains National Park in Tennessee and North Carolina.

At Joshua Tree National Park in Southern California, volunteers have hauled away garbage, cleaned restrooms and restocked them with toilet paper, said John Lauretig, executive director of Friends of Joshua Tree.

"We've been dubbed the 'Toilet Paper Angels,'" he said.

Yosemite National Park in California reported Friday that a man died after falling into a river on Christmas Day, and a spokesman said a statement was not issued more promptly and the investigation is taking longer than usual because of the shutdown.

People living near Yosemite have organized work crews, while businesses in neighboring towns are offering incentives for visitors to remove their rubbish.

The Rush Creek Lodge in Groveland gave a complimentary coffee, cocktail or dessert to all bringing a full trash bag from the park. Spokeswoman Teri Marshall said the lodge was trying to devise a slogan for the promotion.

"'Turning garbage into goodies' is where I think I might be hanging our hat," Marshall said.

People visiting Yosemite on Saturday will be receiving garbage bags and tips on how best to use the park during the shutdown, courtesy of the Tuolumne County Visitors' Bureau. One recommendation: "Go before you go," a reference to the limited number of open bathrooms, executive director Lisa Mayo said.

Grand Canyon National Park is open with help from Arizona, which was paying about $64,000 a week to cover restroom cleaning, trash removal and snow plowing. Anyone with permits to hike in the backcountry or raft on the Colorado River could go, but the park wasn't issuing new permits, spokeswoman Emily Davis said.

Utah chipped in about $7,500 a day from Dec. 22 to 31 to keep Zion, Bryce Canyon and Arches national parks running. Since then, the nonprofit Zion Forever Project has committed $16,000 to keep a skeleton crew on hand and the bathrooms and visitor center open at Zion, which was drawing several thousand people a day, executive director Lyman Hafen said.

"It's extremely demoralizing for the park service folks who want to be doing their job and caring for the park the way they do," Hafen said.

Three Republican congressmen from Utah — Chris Stewart, Rob Bishop and John Curtis — sent a letter Friday to Acting Interior Secretary David Bernhardt asking him to take emergency measures to restart regular operations at the state's five major national parks.

Friends of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park raised $114,000 to keep the park for open for nine days with limited service, executive director Elizabeth Fien said. The money was used to pay law enforcement staff and rangers, including one who monitors endangered nene, or Hawaiian goose.

The Death Valley Natural History Association said it would pay to keep the visitor center at Death Valley National Park open until at least Thursday. Winter is a busy time at the park straddling the California-Nevada line, drawing visitors to its salt flats, dunes and canyons when the usual scorching temperatures are at bay.

A support group for Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in northern Michigan was cleaning toilets and grooming a popular trail for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. But snow-covered parking lots weren't plowed, and the visitors center near Lake Michigan was closed, leaving the volunteer group to consider putting up an information tent.

"A lot of people who go to the park are looking for advice about where to go — what areas are good for snowshoeing and which might be dangerous, and there's no one here to tell them," said Kerry Kelly, the group's chairman. "It's extremely frustrating."

Another nonprofit was paying a private company to clean portable toilets near two popular trailheads at Shenandoah National Park, which includes a 101-mile (163-kilometer) section of the Appalachian Trail.

Some parks have closed, including Arches and Canyonlands in Utah, where a snowstorm made roads impassable. Park officials posted on Twitter that the shutdown left no money for snowplowing. In California, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park has closed and Muir Woods National Monument will shut down Monday because of overflowing trash and human waste.

At the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge in Florida's Everglades, no rangers were available to empty a metal tube where visitors deposit $5 entry fees on the honor system. After a canoe rental company notified authorities, officers with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service emptied the cash box and were monitoring it as part of their limited operations.

Conservation groups warned that volunteers could provide only a minimum level of service. Without full-time, professional staffing, natural resources and cultural artifacts could be damaged and people could be injured, they said.

"The political pressure to keep the parks open needs to come off so managers can evaluate what they're capable of protecting and whether they can keep visitors safe," said Kristen Brengel, vice president of government affairs for the National Parks Conservation Association.

AP
Two surfers walk past an open garbage bin and piles of trash at Ocean Beach in San Francisco, Thursday, Jan. 3, 2019.

Health & Wellness

This advertorial is sponsored by Tan Holdings HEALTH IS WEALTH Tan Siu Lin Foundation

By RASHA ALI
TRIBUNE NEWS AGENCY

How to get fit and stay in shape in the new year

"I'm going to start working out and eating healthy once the New Year starts."

If that goal has been on your New Year's resolution list for the past however many years and you're still finding a way to stick to your health-oriented plans, we're not judging you. We've all been there.

This time around, though, things will be different because you're going to have a plan and you're going to be armed with tips on how to stick to your New Year's resolutions for the rest of the year (and maybe even for the rest of your life).

BreAnna Wiley, a personal trainer for four years, cautions that if you're new to fitness, starting a new routine is going to be difficult regardless of whether you decide to start in the New Year or any random Tuesday.

Don't wait until the New Year

There's no better time to start your new healthy journey than the present.

"It takes time to break and build new habits, heading into the new year with momentum from the last days of 2018 will position you to better succeed," said Osamoje Imoohi, a certified personal trainer.

Write your goals down

Tuekeha Huntley, who's been a personal trainer for 2 years, recommends writing down your goals and then writing down specific plans for your goals—basically, make plans for your plans.

"What can you do to hit those goals? Be specific," Huntley said. "Break it down into realistic goals. Not just I want to lose 10 pounds in three months, but write down baby steps. This is the way that I'm going to lose 10 pounds in three months—so you're writing down I'm going to join a gym, I'm going to do 30 minutes of cardio."

Don't neglect your diet

Charity Faye, a chef and wellness expert, recommends that you remind yourself that you are a valuable human being and that you matter and to treat yourself that way by eating foods that will make your body feel good—like fruits and vegetables.

"Our diet is critical to our ability to have good moods, to think clearly and to rid ourselves of illnesses and diseases and other factors that prevent us from having the willpower to go work out and take care of ourselves," Faye said.

The wellness chef adds that you should listen to your body when it comes to food. some days you may need to eat carbs, so go ahead and eat carbs and another week you may not need to eat meat, so go ahead and skip the steak for dinner.

Huntley also agrees that you can't just work out and not change anything about your dietary habits. She said that in addition to writing down your fitness plans, write down your dietary one as well. Keep a food journal; that way it will be easy to track how many calories you're consuming and then you can slowly cut from there.

Don't buy into the trendy diet or workout fads

We're constantly bombarded with new dietary fads or workout trends, but fitness experts recommend to steer clear of those.

"If you say I'm going to do the keto diet for 30 days because it's a trend you're going to fall off," said Faye. "Don't set a goal for the next 30 days – say today this is what my body needs therefore this is what I'm going to give my body."

Huntley agrees that one of the most important parts about achieving your goals is being consistent and staying on your own path and buying into this fads will distract you from your own personal journey.

"I feel like everyone knows the recipe to lose weight and be fit is to exercise and eat right but they don't have a connection with being consistent or the ability to follow through," said Huntley.

Consistency is what will help you achieve your goals for the long term—not fad diets.

It's not going to happen over night

Starting a new fitness routine and committing to eating healthy is not a small feat and that's why most people think of it as a lifestyle change instead of just dieting and exercising. These new changes to your routine will take time to adjust to and it will take time for you to reach your goals.

"A lot of people start a journey focusing on the big picture saying I want to lose 50 to 100 lbs instead of focusing on the day to day work to reach that, said Wiley.

Find someone to hold you accountable

Grab a friend, a trainer, your neighbor, someone or anyone to hold you accountable to your goals.

Huntley believes that accountability is a major factor in sticking to your new plans. She advises getting someone that will check up on you and ask if you've been to the gym today or ask what you had to eat.

Imoohi agrees that you need people in your circle who also want to see you succeed. He recommends surrounding yourself with people that share the same values and goals as you.

"Your tribe determines your vibe," Imoohi said. "Having a supportive community makes the journey a bit more bearable and less difficult."

Plan, plan and plan some more

Make your new goals a priority in your life.

Faye said that people should plan their meals the same way they plan on going to work or hanging out with friends.

"We will stick to our health commitments if we plan it in our day to do so," said Faye.

Meditate

Getting your mind right will set you up for success in your fitness journey.

"One of the best ways people can stay dedicated to a new year fitness routine is to incorporate meditation into their practice, especially the Shamatha technique," said Shaina Lynn, a twerk fitness instructor who incorporates yoga and meditation into your classes. "Meditation has been proven to improve memory, deduce stress related illness, improve sleep, and boost immunity. When you feel better you are more likely to pursue your goals."

So there you have it folks. Head in to this New Year armed with new tips and ready to tackle your fitness and health goals head first. We don't want another repeat of what happened last year ... or the years before that.

PERSONAL TRAINER

Repairing your desk-job posture

These exercises counteract changes in your posture and muscle tone that sitting at a computer or other sedentary work causes.

"Waxing"
Sit straight, press elbows against sides, turn hands outward with palms facing down; push shoulders together and make a waxing motion in the air for 20 seconds; repeat four times

Wall angels
Press lower back, elbows, forearms and wrists against wall; lift and lower arms slowly in a small arc; keep elbows touching wall; repeat 10 times

Abdomen isometrics
Breathe normally; sit with back supported; tighten stomach as strongly as possible; push with fingers and tighten abdominal muscles to resist them; hold 15 seconds; repeat five times

Standing up from sit
Sit forward in chair with knees a little ahead of feet; stand up slowly keeping neck and back erect; don't bend forward; sit down immediately, but don't put full weight on chair; do three sets of 10 repetitions each

Source: University of California-Los Angeles Office of Environment, Health and Safety

© 2011 MCT Graphic: Paul Trap

Quinn on Nutrition: Tips from weight-loss winners

By BARBARA QUINN
THE MONTEREY COUNTY HERALD

We're in the month for new beginnings. Or rather, we're halfway through the month for new beginnings. So how are we doing?

If you are still trying to figure out the best strategy to take off those leftover holiday pounds, here's a news flash: You will lose weight with any diet that helps you eat fewer calories than you burn for energy. Cut out the late night snacking. Choose to eat more vegetables than French fries. That could do it.

What we really need though, is a way to keep the excess weight off after we lose it. To the rescue is the National Weight Loss Control Registry (NWCR), a program that tracks the strategies of real people who have lost between 30 and 300 pounds (really) and kept it off for five or more years. These investigators continuously track the habits of successful losers so that we can learn from what they have learned. And more than 10,000 men and women have participated in this research thus far. Here's what we now know from their experiences:

Get help if you need it. A little less than half (45%) of those who successfully lost weight and kept it off long-term did it on their own. The other 55% enlisted the help of some type of weight loss program.

Accept that you will need to change some habits. Most (98%) of these participants who effectively lost weight say they modified their food intake (duh). And 94% increased their physical activity. Interestingly, too, the most frequently reported mode of exercise for successful loss was walking.

And after the weight comes off, what strategies work to keep it off? Besides maintaining a diet that is low in both fat and calories, here are the top tips from these weight management role models:

Eat breakfast every day. More than three-fourths of successful losers "break the fast" at the start of each day.

Step on the scale at least once a week. Weekly weight checks help these folks stay on track with their goals.

Do something else besides watching television. Almost two-thirds of successful weight losers say they watch less than 10 hours of television each week. Average at least one hour of physical activity each day. It all adds up, even if you have to get it in 10-minute intervals.

Not rocket science, but these simple strategies have been proven over and over to work. We just need to do them. And if you need motivation, read the success stories of these folks at www.nwcr.ws. Happy New Year.

Barbara Quinn is a registered dietitian and certified diabetes educator at the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula. Email her at bquinn@chomp.org.

Life & Style

Kevin Hart says he's considering Oscar hosting gig again

NEW YORK (AP)—Prodded by Ellen DeGeneres, comic Kevin Hart says he'll reconsider his decision to step down as host of the Academy Awards.

Hart had backed away two days after being named host last month when some homophobic tweets he had made a decade ago resurfaced. But DeGeneres urged him to host the show during an interview that aired Friday on her talk show.

The motion picture Academy has not named a replacement host for its Feb. 24 awards show.

"You have grown," DeGeneres told him. "You have apologized. You're apologizing again right now. You've done it. Don't let these people win. Host the Oscars."

She applied subtle pressure by saying after one commercial break, "We're back with this year's Oscars host, Kevin Hart."

Hart

Hart told her that "you have put a lot of things on my mind" and that he would think about their conversation.

The LGBTQ watchdog organization GLAAD on Friday reiterated its position that Hart not step down as host but instead use the platform to "send an unequivocal message of acceptance to LGBTQ youth."

If there's a campaign to get him back, it couldn't have started more slickly: on the hugely successful talk show run by one of Hollywood's most prominent gay celebrities, who hosted the Oscars herself in 2007.

DeGeneres said she called the Academy this week to urge that Hart be brought back, and was told that officials would be "thrilled" if he did. An Academy representative did not immediately return messages for comment.

Hart wrote homophobic remarks on Twitter mostly between 2009-2011, including one where he said: "Yo if my son comes home & try's 2 play with my daughters doll house I'm going 2 break it over his head & say n my voice 'stop that's gay.'" It was later deleted. He has also made anti-gay comments in his standup in the past.

Hart told her that when his old messages resurfaced, "what was once the brightest light ever just got real dark." He initially said he wouldn't apologize because he had addressed the issue several times. But given an ultimatum to apologize, he did so and stepped down.

From Cooper to Coogler, AFI Awards brought out the stars

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The wine was flowing and the atmosphere relaxed Friday at the American Film Institute Awards, which brought out some of Hollywood's brightest stars of the moment, from Emily Blunt to Michael B. Jordan, for a celebratory luncheon in Los Angeles.

It's an entertainment industry anomaly when no one walks out of an awards show a "loser." But that's the deal at the annual AFI Awards, where the winners—10 films and 10 television shows—have already been announced, no speeches are required and everyone turns up to have fun.

In a look around the star-studded room, you could see "BlacKkKlansman" director Spike Lee bee-lining to give "Black Panther" director Ryan Coogler a big hug, Bradley Cooper greeting his "A Star Is Born" co-star Sam Elliott, "Roma" director Alfonso Cuaron chatting with "Better Call Saul" star Bob Odenkirk, and Blunt running between the tables for "Mary Poppins Returns" and "A Quiet Place," both of which were honorees. (She sat next to husband John Krasinski, who directed "A Quiet Place.")

"The game is, there is no game," AFI President Bob Gazzale said. "You have won. And more importantly, you are one."

Films recognized were "Black Panther," ''BlacKkKlansman," Eighth Grade," ''The Favourite," ''First Reformed," ''Green Book," ''If Beale Street Could Talk," ''Mary Poppins Returns," ''A Quiet Place" and "A Star Is Born," ("Roma," which was not considered an American film, was given a special honor). And television programs recognized were "The Americans," ''The Assassination of Gianni Versace," ''Atlanta," ''Barry," ''Better

Helped by Beyonce clip, Paris' Louvre breaks visitor record

PARIS (AP)—The Louvre in Paris, the world's most visited museum, received a record 10.2 million visitors in 2018, numbers boosted by a video clip shot by pop star Beyonce amid its paintings and sculptures.

The Louvre also mentioned in a statement Thursday the success of its flagship exhibition on French master Delacroix as a reason for the record.

The video of Beyonce and her husband Jay Z, featuring the Mona Lisa and other world-famous artworks, has been viewed over 146 million times on YouTube.

The museum notes a significant rise in the number of foreign visitors —almost three-quarters of total visitor numbers—mostly from the United States, China, other European countries and Brazil.

Tourism in the French capital has rebounded since 2017 after a sharp fall following 2015 terror attacks.

AP
In this Tuesday, Jan. 6, 2015, Chris Baker and Jennifer Hinson from Nashville, Tennessee, use a selfie stick in front of the Louvre Pyramide in Paris.

Netflix and chill no more—streaming is getting complicated

By MAE ANDERSON
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

Streaming TV may never again be as simple, or as affordable, as it is now.

Disney and WarnerMedia are each launching their own streaming services in 2019 in a challenge to Netflix's dominance. Netflix viewers will no longer be able to watch hit movies such as "Black Panther" or "Moana," which will soon reside on Disney's subscription service. WarnerMedia, a unit of AT&T, will also soon have its own service to showcase its library of blockbuster films and HBO series.

Families will have to decide between paying more each month or losing access to some of their favorite dramas, comedies, musicals and action flicks.

"There's definitely a lot of change coming," said Paul Verna at eMarketer, a digital research company. "People will have more choices of what to stream, but at the same time the market is already fragmented and intimidating and it is only going to get more so."

Media companies are seeking to capitalize on the popularity and profitability of streaming. But by fragmenting the market, they're also narrowing the once wide selection that fueled the rise of internet-based video. About 55 percent of U.S. households now subscribe to paid streaming video services, up from just 10 percent in 2009, according to research firm Deloitte.

Just as Netflix, Hulu and Amazon Prime tempted people to "cut the cord" by canceling traditional cable TV packages, the newer services are looking to dismember those more-inclusive options.

Disney Plus is set to launch late next year with new Marvel and Star Wars programming, along with its library of animated and live-action movies and shows. It hasn't announced pricing yet, but Disney CEO Bob Iger said in an August call with analysts that it will likely be less than Netflix, which runs $8 to $14 a month, since its library will be smaller.

AT&T plans a three-tier offering from WarnerMedia, with a slate of new and library content centered around the existing HBO streaming app. No word on pricing yet.

Individual channels, such as Fox, ESPN, CBS and Showtime, are also getting into the act. Research group TDG predicts that every major TV network will launch a direct-to-consumer streaming service in the next five years.

Film critics choose 'The Rider' as best picture of 2018

NEW YORK (AP)—The National Society of Film Critics on Saturday chose Chloe Zhao's low-budget debut feature, "The Rider," as best picture of 2018.

Director Alfonso Cuaron's black-and-white "Roma" period piece set in modern Mexico won the most awards—as best picture runner-up, best foreign-language film and for best cinematography. Cuaron also got the award for best director.

The society of leading movie critics voted for Olivia Colman as best actress in "The Favourite," and Ethan Hawke as best actor in "First Reformed." The top accolade for best supporting actor went to Steve Yeun of "Burning," while Regina King of "If Beale Street Could Talk" nabbed best supporting actress. About 40 of the society's 64 members voted.

Zhao

Best screenplay went to "The Death of Stalin," and best non-fiction film to "Minding the Gap," a documentary directed by Bing Liu about the complex friendship among three skateboarding young men, including himself, in their hometown of Rockford, Illinois.

The film critics society was founded in 1966, electing its voting critics from newspapers and other major U.S. media outlets. The 53rd annual awards were hosted by New York's Film Society of Lincoln Center.

Justin Chang, the society's chairman and the Los Angeles Times' film critic, told The Associated Press that 2018 yielded "an embarrassment of riches" among new movies, but "The Rider" stood out among them—a contemporary western drama shot in the badlands of South Dakota. There, a family living in a trailer against the backdrop of the rodeo circuit struggles with autism, brain damage from a bronc riding competition, drinking and gambling, but somehow endures.

The film, directed by a Beijing-born woman who was educated in the United States and lives here, "is a mixture of documentary realism and fiction," Chang said. "She uses nonprofessional actors in a way that's intimate and organic; it's a heartbreaking movie with a lot of staying power."

Golden Globes another sign of value of Asian inclusion

By TERRY TANG
ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Golden Globe Awards is set to feel like a major evolution from its 2015 broadcast, when comedian Margaret Cho's appearance as a North Korean film journalist who spoke in heavily accented English was slammed by some as awkward and racist.

Cho was the only Asian on stage the entire evening. Sunday's show will have a decidedly different feel, with Sandra Oh as co-host and the rom-com "Crazy Rich Asians" up for two nominations. The recognition feels like a seismic shift for Asians and Asian-Americans in Hollywood after decades of struggling to get starring roles while dealing with stereotypes and "whitewashing."

The last time the Globes honored an all-Asian film at that level was the 1961 musical "Flower Drum Song," which was nominated in the same categories as "Crazy Rich Asians": best comedy or musical and best performance by an actress in a musical or comedy. The Globes has doled out nearly 1,000 film and TV acting trophies in its 76-year history, including for now defunct categories like best juvenile performance and "new star of the year." Of all those wins, 10 have gone to performers of Asian descent, including Oh.

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association announced that Oh and Andy Samberg will share emcee duties for the ceremony. Oh, who earned a TV supporting actress Globe in 2006 for "Grey's Anatomy," will be the Globes' first ever Asian — not to mention Canadian — host. She is also up for best actress in a television drama for "Killing Eve." She, Constance Wu and Darren Criss, who is half-Filipino, are the Asian acting nominees this year.

Oh

Wu, nominated for "Crazy Rich Asians," believes the film won Globes recognition in part because so many moviegoers turned it into a blockbuster.

"The fact that Hollywood made this story and people showed up for this story and now it's being recognized by the Hollywood Foreign Press —that shows our country values our story and wants to see more of it," Wu told The Associated Press shortly after finding out she was nominated.

The last time an Asian woman was nominated in Wu's category was 1974 when Yvonne Elliman was nominated for "Jesus Christ Superstar." Before her, only two other Asian actresses were nominated, including Miyoshi Umeki, the first Asian entertainer to win an acting Oscar.

Chris Tashima, a member of the Academy Asians Action Committee, an informal group of Asian and Pacific Islander members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, believes the recognition has made more people aware that the success of "Crazy Rich Asians" wasn't a fluke.

Restored Pompeii gladiator building open to public

The general manager of the archaeological park of Pompeii, Massimo Osanna, stands by a fresco at the Schola Armaturarum building in Pompeii, Italy, Thursday, Jan. 3, 2019. A 2,000-year-old building where gladiators trained in ancient Pompeii is now open to visitors, eight years after its collapse following rainfall. The Pompeii archaeological site said the public can visit the Schola Armaturarum on Thursdays and that restoration experts will explain how they painstakingly restored frescoes inside the building. AP

ROME (AP)—A 2,000-year-old building where Roman gladiators in Pompeii trained for combat has opened to the public eight years after its collapse following rainfall.

The Pompeii archaeological site said the public can tour the Schola Armaturarum on Thursdays. Experts will explain their painstaking restoration of frescoes that decorated the site where gladiators trained before combat in the ancient Roman city.

Its opening was hailed by Italy's culture ministry as the "symbolic place of Pompeii's rebirth," following years of dismaying news that various ruins had crumbled amid modern-day neglect of the sprawling, once-flourishing city that was destroyed by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 A.D.

The building, which has been previously excavated some 100 years ago, had also suffered heavy damage from World War II Allied bombing. A few years later, reinforced concrete was used to build a protective cover.

A park statement said prosecutors investigating the 2010 collapse didn't pinpoint responsibility. But it said there were several "probable" interlaced factors that were aggravated by days of heavy rain. Those factors included probable malfunction of a drainage system, the weight of the postwar addition of cement and iron and "lack of a planned system of monitoring and maintenance."

Restoration work after the collapse did, however, bolster knowledge about the building's use, with archaeologists saying it appears to have served as a home to an ancient military association, which sometimes hosted banquets there.

Excavations carried out in part to shore up the structure revealed areas, apparently used by servants, to prepare for such banquets, as well as amphorae, or storage jugs, containing oil, fine wine and fish sauce imported from Crete, Sicily, Spain and Africa, the archaeological park said.

What to watch for at today's Golden Globes

NEW YORK (AP)—Dramatic period pieces will vie for the top comedy-musical awards and song-stuffed movies are poised to dominate the dramatic categories. Welcome to the 76th annual Golden Globes.

Category confusion often reigns at the Globes. Remember when laughers like "The Martian" and "Get Out" competed as comedies? But the Globes, reliably the frothiest, quirkiest and most entertaining stop in the awards-season march to the Academy Awards, might feel especially upside down this year.

The night, to be broadcast live Sunday on NBC, may ultimately belong to Bradley Cooper's "A Star Is Born" revival. It's the favorite for best picture (drama), best actress (Lady Gaga), best song ("Shallow") and best actor (Bradley Cooper). The film's stiffest competition may come from another music movie: the Freddie Mercury biopic "Bohemian Rhapsody," whose star, Rami Malek, some believe could pull off the acting upset over Cooper.

Despite their copious tuneage, the campaigns of both "A Star Is Born" and "Bohemian Rhapsody" elected for the more serious dramatic category. For "A Star Is Born," it's a kind of power move to firmly establish itself as the Oscar front runner many believe it is.

Oscar voting, as it turns out this year, commences Monday, the morning after the Golden Globes. If "A Star Is Born" runs away with the Globes, it will enter the nominations period of the Academy Awards as the favorite by a wide margin.

With "A Star Is Born" (along with "Black Panther," ''If Beale Street Could Talk" and "BlacKkKlansman") up for best picture as a drama, that's left a few humor-tinged movies many would peg as dramas—''The Favourite," ''Green Book" and "Vice"—to give the comedy/musical side of the Globes a bit more heft than usual.

Of those, "Vice" comes in with the most nominations of any film (six), but the chances of "The Favourite" are probably the best on Sunday. "The Favourite," Yorgos Lanthimos' triangular power struggle in Queen Anne's court, is the most decorated film of the bunch in an awards season that, despite any other fluctuations, has been rigid in its acclaim for the powerhouse trio of Olivia Colman, Rachel Weisz and Emma Stone.

Police: 5 teenage girls killed in Poland 'Escape Room' fire

WARSAW, Poland (AP)—A fire broke out at an "Escape Room" game location in northern Poland on Friday, killing five teenage girls and injuring a man, authorities said.

Police said the dead were found after firefighters put out the blaze, which began around 5 p.m. at an "Escape Room" venue in Koszalin. Highly popular with teenagers across Poland, the "Escape Room" game has players locked inside a room or building and they must find clues that help them get out.

Interior Minister Joachim Brudzinski said the girls were all 15 years old.

Monika Kosiec, a spokeswoman for police in Koszalin, said the victims were thought to have been celebrating one of their birthdays. She said a 25-year-old man had been hospitalized with burns and could not be immediately questioned by investigators probing the cause of the fire.

Spokesman for regional firefighters, Tomasz Kubiak, said the bodies were found in a room that was near the fire but was not hit by it.

The Polish state news agency PAP said it had learned unofficially that the girls died from carbon monoxide asphyxiation.

Footage on private TVN24 showed ambulances and fire engines in front of a detached two-story house with a large "Escape Room" sign in front.

Brudzinski ordered fire safety checks to be held at all "Escape Room" locations in Poland.

President Andrzej Duda said on Twitter it was a "crushing tragedy" that five young girls died so early in their lives.

Britney Spears puts Vegas shows on hold due to dad's ill health

Spears

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Britney Spears is putting her planned Las Vegas residency on hold to focus on her father's recovery from a life-threatening illness.

The pop superstar announced Friday she is going on an indefinite work hiatus.

Her residency was scheduled to kick off in February at Park Theater at the Park MGM casino-resort.

Spears says she is dedicating her focus and energy to care for her family.

The statement announcing her decision says her father, Jamie Spears, has had a complicated recovery after becoming ill two months ago, undergoing emergency surgery and spending several days at a hospital.

Refunds for "Britney Domination" shows are available at the point of purchase.

Bill Hornbuckle, president of casino operator MGM Resorts International, says the company respects Spears' commitment to her family.

Brother of JonBenet Ramsey reaches settlement with CBS

BOULDER, Colo. (AP)—A $750 million defamation lawsuit filed against CBS by the brother of JonBenet Ramsey has been settled.

The Daily Camera reports court records show that a Michigan Circuit Court judge on Wednesday dismissed the lawsuit filed by Burke Ramsey in December 2016.

The terms of the settlement have not been disclosed.

The lawsuit said that Burke Ramsey's reputation was ruined after a television series suggested he killed his 6-year-old sister more than two decades ago.

A spokesperson for producers of the TV program said in a statement that "an amicable resolution of their differences" has been reached.

An attorney for CBS declined to comment.

The beauty pageant star was found dead in the basement of her family's home in Boulder, Colorado, in December 1996. A prosecutor cleared her parents and brother.

'Black Panther,' 'Crazy Rich Asians' snag PGA nominations

AP

This file image released by Disney shows Lupita Nyong'o, from left, Chadwick Boseman and Letitia Wright in a scene from "Black Panther."

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The producers behind hits "Black Panther," ''Crazy Rich Asians," ''A Star Is Born" and "Bohemian Rhapsody" are among the 10 nominees for the top prize at the Producers Guild Awards.

The Producers Guild of America announced its selections Friday for it 30th installment, which also included "BlacKkKlansman," ''The Favourite," ''Green Book, "A Quiet Place," ''Roma" and "Vice."

Notably absent from the nominees were "First Man" and "If Beale Street Could Talk."

The winner of the PGA award has often gone on to win the best picture prize at the Oscars as happened last year with "The Shape of Water." It diverged, however, in the two previous years.

Animated nominees included "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse," and "Incredibles 2."

Winners will be unveiled at a ceremony in Beverly Hills on Jan. 19.

Kid Rock stirs more controversy with planned bar sign

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Singer Kid Rock has hit another sour note with some in Nashville, this time over a large sign planned for his recently opened bar.

News outlets report the 20-foot-tall (6-meter-tall) neon sign will feature a giant guitar in which the base of the instrument is intentionally shaped like a woman's buttocks.

Metro Council approved the necessary aerial encroachment to allow for construction and installation of the sign. Mayor David Briley signed into law the council resolution authorizing the sign Friday.

But its approval didn't sit well with several council members, who called the sign tacky and bemoaned that Lower Broadway has steered further away from a place for family fun.

In November, Kid Rock's profane comments on live TV got him booted from leading the Nashville Christmas Parade.

Happy homebody would rather skip weeknight get-togethers

DEAR ABBY: I'm struggling with a situation with my friends and colleagues.

I have a routine I stick to which keeps my priorities in check. I get done with work, go home, have dinner, work out and spend quality time with my puppy. Lately, people keep inviting me to weeknight happy hours and get-togethers, but more often than not, I don't want to go.

I'm conflicted because I feel obligated to go and be a "good friend," but if I do, I'm left feeling resentful because my routine has been interrupted. I'm also not one of those people who WANTS to be invited to everything and truly wouldn't be hurt to be excluded altogether. Please help.

TIME FOR MYSELF IN THE EAST

DEAR TIME: Do not socially isolate yourself completely. Explain to your close friends and colleagues that you need your routine in order to function your best, which is why, although you would like to, you are unable to accept all the invitations you are being offered. Then pick and choose so you join them once or twice a month, and they won't think you don't like them —particularly your colleagues.

DEAR ABBY: I have been married for 35 years. My oldest daughter, Amanda (now 39), wanted to find her "roots." I gave her as much info as I could find out about her dad, and she contacted and kind of enveloped herself into his family. Not good enough of a family, I guess, because now she has taken a DNA test. Now I'm really angry.

Amanda sent a text from an unknown "sister" asking if I knew who the daddy was. Why does the daddy du jour matter that much? Amanda was raised by a strong, loving and responsible man—my husband. Are cheek swabs eliminating family?

REAL FAMILY IN THE WEST

DEAR REAL FAMILY: On the contrary. They appear to be expanding "family" by leaps and bounds. Like many others, Amanda feels a need to know more about her background. You shouldn't feel angry about her curiosity because it's normal. That said, knowing the identity of her birth father should in no way lessen the importance of your husband in her life, particularly if they have had a close relationship.

DEAR ABBY: A couple of years ago, I gave a friend a nice birthday gift that was for the whole family. It was a one-of-a-kind item I thought they would really enjoy. I had researched and read up on it and then had the piece custom designed. They said they loved the item when it arrived, but I have never seen them use it. When I ask where it is, they tell me it's still wrapped up in a box under the bed because they don't have room for it. I believe it, because their apartment is very crowded.

Would it be OK to ask if I could buy it back? I would like to have it since they are not using it. I am willing to pay whatever price they would feel comfortable with. Would this put them in an uncomfortable situation?

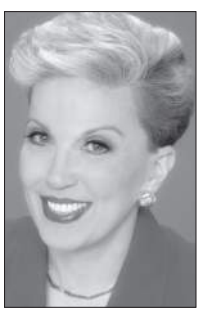
NOT SURE IN NEW YORK

DEAR NOT SURE: Not knowing your friends, I can't predict what their reaction to your proposal would be. However, because the item is not being used, I don't think it would be out of line to ask the question. Go for it.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

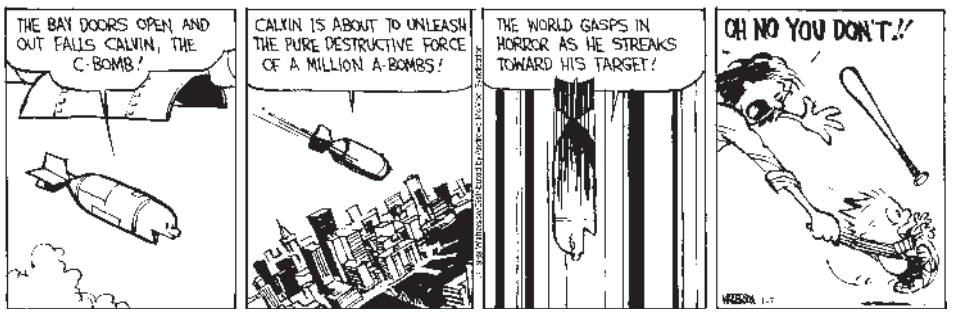


Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

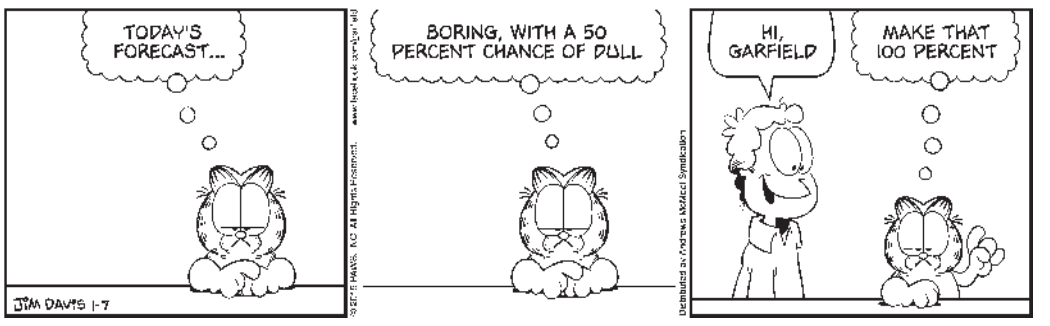
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


THE BAY DOORS OPEN AND OUT FALLS CALVIN, THE C-BOMB!
CALVIN IS ABOUT TO UNLEASH THE PURE DESTRUCTIVE FORCE OF A MILLION A-BOMBS!
THE WORLD GASPS IN HORROR AS HE STREAKS TOWARD HIS TARGET!
OH NO YOU DON'T!!

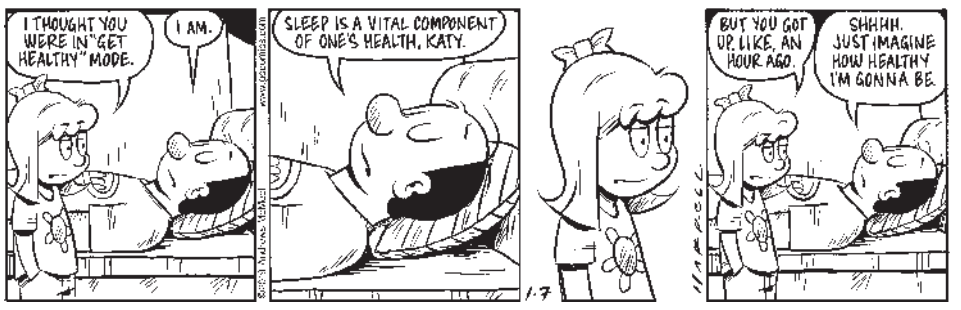
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



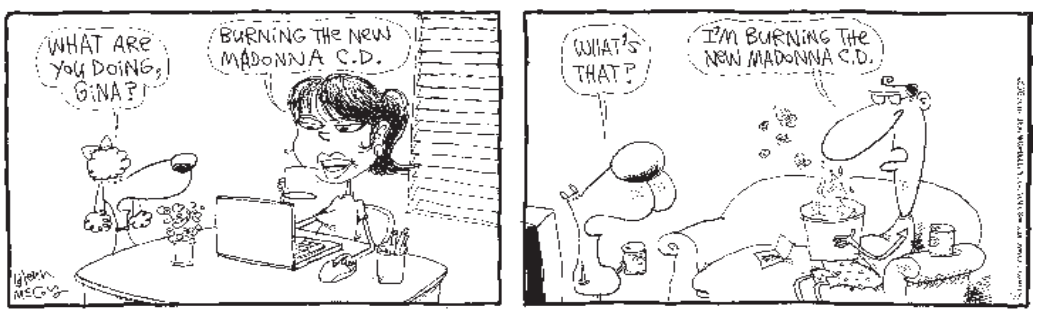
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN "GET HEALTHY" MODE.
I AM.
SLEEP IS A VITAL COMPONENT OF ONE'S HEALTH, KATY.
BUT YOU GOT UP, LIKE, AN HOUR AGO.
SHHHH. JUST IMAGINE HOW HEALTHY I'M GONNA BE.
1-7

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 To boot
5 Tummy muscles
8 Writer Rice
12 Appeared suddenly
14 Earth
15 Regatta
16 Pout
17 "— a Camera"
18 Decisive moments
20 A Musketeer
23 Prejudice
24 Reddish horse
25 Lake activity
28 CCV x X
29 Pre-diploma hurdles
30 Dig in
32 Straw hats
34 Carton sealer
35 School orgs.
36 Used a sponge
37 Stir-fry veggie
40 Crony
41 Slanted type (Abbr.)
42 Yacht lover's event
47 French 101 verb
48 Veteran
49 Easy targets
50 Ballot marks
51 Whig's rival

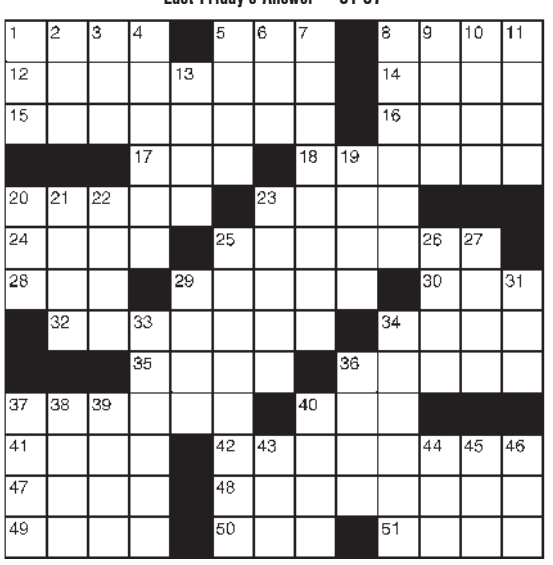
DOWN

1 NYPD alert
2 Brit's restroom
3 Hotel amenity
4 Choice
5 Leading man?
6 Tampa Bay NFLer
7 Dishes not on the regular menu
8 Home of St. Francis
9 Entre —
10 Egyptian river
11 BPOE members
13 Historic times
19 "Phooey!"
20 Branch
21 Pyramid, maybe
22 Saintly ring
23 Wild pigs
25 Challah holder
26 Tide variety
27 Be slack-jawed
29 "Beetle Bailey" dog
31 Danson of "Cheers"
33 Granny Smiths
34 Mild cheese
36 Bulb measure
37 Slapstick arsenal
38 Jazzy James
39 Seniors' org.
40 Cushions
43 Flamenco cheer
44 Med. plan option
45 Not 'neath
46 Like some humor

Solution time: 26 mins.

M	A	P	■	L	E	A	F	■	X	E	N	A
A	D	A	■	A	R	I	A	■	A	D	O	G
T	O	P	S	T	O	R	Y	■	N	A	V	E
■	■	■	E	A	T	S	■	M	A	M	A	S
D	I	R	G	F	■	F	I	F	D	■	■	■
I	N	C	A	■	P	O	P	M	U	S	I	C
S	T	J	■	S	A	P	G	E	■	T	O	O
C	O	P	A	P	L	E	A	■	C	A	T	S
■	■	■	M	I	S	S	■	L	A	N	A	I
O	C	F	A	N	■	■	S	U	R	F	■	■
D	I	A	Z	■	H	O	P	A	L	O	N	G
D	A	R	E	■	A	L	O	U	■	R	E	C
S	O	L	D	■	M	E	■	S	■	D	E	B

Last Friday's Answer 01-07



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jeremy Renner, 48; Nicolas Cage, 55; Katie Couric, 62; David Caruso, 63.

Happy Birthday: Look for alternate routes and ways to accomplish your goals. Being open to suggestions and focusing on personal improvements and physical fitness will encourage you to participate with people who strive to maintain good health and disciplined lifestyles. Rid yourself of temptation and walk away from those trying to lead you astray. Choose to take positive action. Your numbers are 3, 12, 20, 28, 36, 39, 43.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Use your time wisely. Work on self-improvement and personal gain and avoid getting into a debate with someone who doesn't see things your way. Walk away from any situation that has the potential to lead to discord. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20)*: Refuse to let an emotional incident get the better of you. A clear head and a little nudge is all that's required to put you in a good position when dealing with friends and colleagues. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Complaints can only be justified if you have completed your responsibilities. Physical exercise will help you blow off steam and make you feel good about your look. Romance will ease stress and bring you closer to someone you love. ✪✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Take care of personal business before you are questioned about what you've been doing. Be punctual and prepared if you want to make an impression on someone you look up to. A unique partnership will be worth considering. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Travel plans, meetings and networking will help you get things moving forward. Mix business with pleasure to make a difference to someone you care about. Don't be afraid to show your emotions. Your honesty will have a ripple effect. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Stay focused on what's important to you. Avoid people who overreact or tempt you to take part in things you shouldn't. Use discipline and intellect when choosing friends, partners and activities that will help you grow personally and advance professionally. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Put greater emphasis on the physical. Take better care of the way you look and feel or deal with emotional issues that have been holding you back. Refuse to let someone run your life. Take charge. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Learn from mistakes, and discuss matters that will clear the air, allowing you to make the changes that will make you happy. An unusual opportunity will develop if you contact an old friend and discuss your concerns and intentions. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Thinking big is fine, but when it comes to putting your plans in motion, be realistic and size down. Don't be fooled by someone's enthusiasm. When it comes to honoring a promise, he or she will let you down. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Don't let the changes going on around you stop you from pursuing what suits you best. Acknowledge what others do, but don't feel obligated to help someone else get ahead. Stay focused on what's important to you. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Share your feelings, and get any tension that's been building out of the way. How you handle situations will make a difference to the overall outcome as well as to an important relationship. Physical fitness will help you chill out. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Offer help, but don't go overboard or someone will take advantage of you. Do your part and use the time spent to make new connections. Losing your temper will make you look bad. Let your actions speak for you. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are intelligent, driven and curious. You are sociable and energetic.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

2						8
	8	7			9	6
7		6	8			
7	3	8		6		
8	4	6	1	9		2
	1		4	3		5
		3	5		4	
3	9		8	2		
4						7

Difficulty Level ★ 1/07

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

5	7	9	6	2	1	8	3	4
4	8	1	5	7	3	6	9	2
6	3	2	9	4	8	7	1	5
1	9	3	8	6	4	5	2	7
2	5	4	3	9	7	1	6	8
7	6	8	1	5	2	9	4	3
8	4	7	2	1	9	3	5	6
9	2	6	7	3	5	4	8	1
3	1	5	4	8	6	2	7	9

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 36

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

HYDRATION Solution: 9 letters

R	C	T	Ⓨ	K	L	I	M	A	S	S	E	S	D	R
F	E	R	E	Ⓓ	N	O	I	T	A	C	I	D	E	M
L	L	T	E	C	Ⓞ	O	L	E	I	G	I	C	H	A
U	L	U	T	A	U	Ⓑ	T	U	N	U	O	O	Y	I
I	S	E	S	O	M	A	J	I	Q	M	S	N	D	N
D	T	S	L	H	H	S	F	I	M	P	E	S	R	T
S	N	F	A	C	E	I	L	E	E	Y	I	U	A	A
P	E	R	E	H	C	D	N	C	L	T	R	M	T	I
I	I	U	M	A	E	D	I	L	R	N	O	P	I	N
H	R	I	N	S	A	A	A	E	R	E	L	T	O	T
C	T	T	U	T	L	U	T	L	E	L	A	I	N	A
E	U	F	I	I	D	A	E	T	N	P	C	O	E	K
C	N	O	S	A	W	S	W	T	N	E	N	N	E	E
I	N	T	R	A	V	E	N	O	U	S	T	I	D	A
S	L	G	E	N	D	E	R	B	R	E	G	G	O	J

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Body, Bottle, Calories, Cells, Consumption, Cool, Creams, Dehydration, Face, Faucet, Fluids, Flush, Fruit, Gender, Gradually, Heat, Hotter, Ice Chips, Infused, Intake, Intravenous, Jogger, Juice, Liquid, Maintain, Mass, Meals, Medication, Milk, Need, Nutrients, Plenty, Recommendations, Runner, Significant, Specialist, Teas, Water, Wet

Last Friday's Answer: Hashtag

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Tel: (670) 234-7859
Fax. (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Petitioner Armando Villafuerte

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF	**CIVIL ACTION NO. 16-0252**
ANGELINA BORJA PEREDO aka ANGELINA P. RIOS,	**NOTICE OF HEARING**
Deceased.	Date: January 31, 2018 Time: 9:00 am Location: TBA Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho

TO ANNIE R. TOKYO AND MELINDA T. HOSSAIN, ALL HEIRS, AND INTERESTED PARTIES:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Administratrix Daisy Ramirez has filed a Petition for Decree of Final Distribution in the above-titled matter. The hearing on the petition is scheduled to be heard on the date and time set forth above at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing.

Dated this 11th day of December, 2018.

/s/ Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk of Court

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Rosemarie Estrella Penaroyo Petitioner, vs. Antonio Jose C. Arriola Respondent,	FCD-DI CIVIL ACTION NO. 19-001 **SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION**

TO THE ABOVE NAME RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 505932 CK Saipan, MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at P.O. Box 500307 Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 2nd day of January, 2019.
/s/
Clerk of Court

Emilie C. Galang
P.O. Box 501029, Saipan MP 96950
Tel. 233-4281

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE MATTER OF THE APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN OF THE ESTATE OF: GABRIEL C. GALANG Minor Child By EMILIE C. GALANG Petitioner	FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 18-0454 NOTICE OF HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardian for the Estate of the above-named minor child by Emilie C. Galang, Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will be held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Superior Court before the Associate Judge Kim-Tenorio on the 1st day of April, 2019 at 9:00am or as soon as thereafter.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court

/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

INVITATION FOR BID

(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: Tuesday, February 05, 2019 • TIME: 10:00 AM

NMHC IFB 2019-003
Building Maintenance of Housing Units in Rota

Proposal packets will be available on January 04, 2019, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan or at the Rota Field Office, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays.

The provisions of the CNMI Procurement regulations, NMIAC 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid conference will be held at 10:00 a.m. on January 11, 2019, at the NMHC Rota Field Office in Songsong Village.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Acting Office Manager, at (670)234-6866/7689 during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ **Aubry Hocog**
Chairwoman, NMHC Board of Directors

/s/ **Herman S. Sablan, Director**
Division of Procurement & Supply

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB19-COTA/FTA-037

SUBMISSION DATE: FEBRUARY 07, 2019 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE AND DELIVERY OF FOUR (4) VANS 2018 OR NEWER ADA COMPLIANT MOBILITY EQUIPPED TRANSIT VANS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OFFICE OF TRANSIT AUTHORITY"

THE SPECIFICATIONS FOR THIS PROJECT WILL BE AVAILABLE ON OR AFTER **JANUARY 07, 2019** AT COTA, OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, 2ND FLOOR SUITE 216 MARIANAS BUSINESS PLAZA, NARU LOOP, SUSUPE, SAIPAN.

ALL QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP **MUST** BE SUBMITTED VIA-EMAIL AT **cota16assistant@gmail.com NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, 4:30, LOCAL TIME, JANUARY 23, 2019.**

THIS PROJECT IS FUNDED BY THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) OF THE U.S DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION; BIDDERS ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH FTA FEDERAL CONTRACT CLAUSES AS APPLICABLE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ALFREDA P. CAMACHO
S/A FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

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- 5-Liner **$24**

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CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

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Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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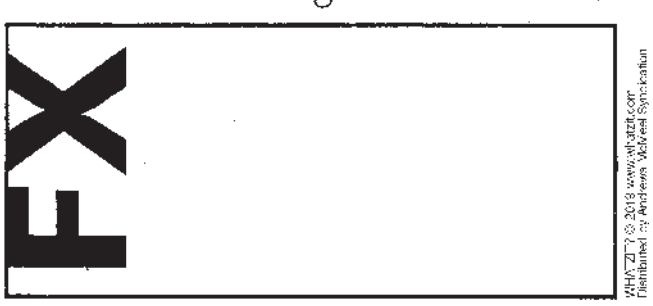
All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



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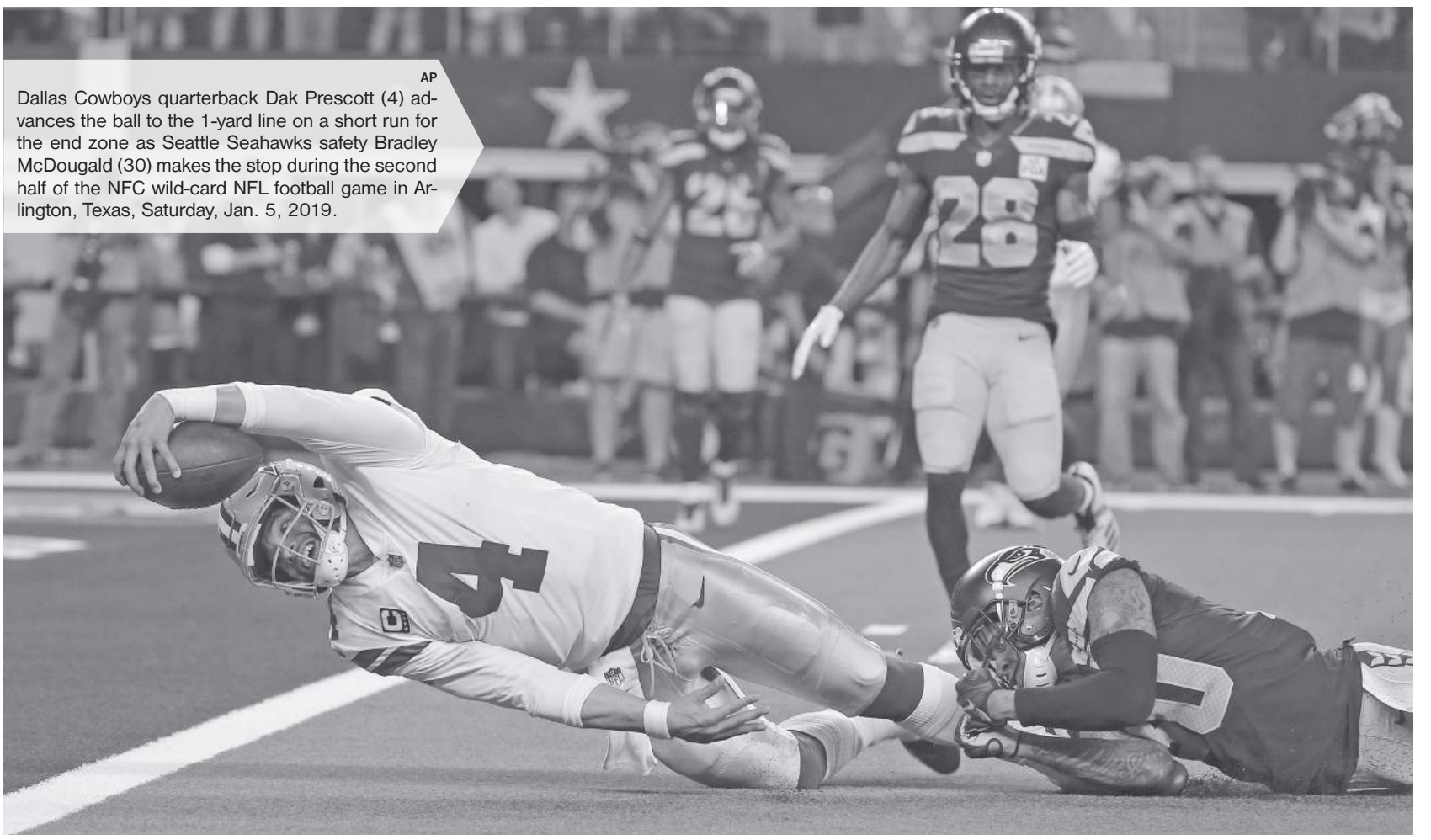
Find today's solution in classified section

Prescott, Cowboys push past Seahawks



AP

Dallas Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott (4) advances the ball to the 1-yard line on a short run for the end zone as Seattle Seahawks safety Bradley McDougald (30) makes the stop during the second half of the NFC wild-card NFL football game in Arlington, Texas, Saturday, Jan. 5, 2019.

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Dak Prescott saw an opening up the middle, then three defenders between him and the first down.

The Dallas quarterback found a way to get there, and get his first playoff victory two years after a sensational rookie season ended in disappointment.

Ezekiel Elliott rushed for 137 yards and the go-ahead touchdown in the fourth quarter, Prescott scored on a sneak after his dazzling head-over-heels run and the Cowboys hung on for a 24-22 wild-card win over the Seattle Seahawks on Saturday night.

The win for the Cowboys (11-6) was the first for Elliott and Prescott after losing a divisional game in their playoff debut as first-year stars two years ago. Dallas will play at either New Orleans or the Los Angeles Rams in the divisional round next weekend.

"It's really just a chance to keep going on, simple as that," Prescott said. "Me and this whole team, we want to win it all. You can't do that without taking care of the first one. A lot of excitement, but my goal is bigger than just one playoff win."

The loss ended a run of nine straight victories in playoff openers for the Seahawks (10-7). The Elias Sports Bureau says it was the longest streak in NFL history.

Leading 17-14, Prescott faced third-and-14 from the Seattle 17 with the 2-minute warning approaching. He took off up the middle on a QB draw, barged through a trio of defenders 6 yards short of the first and went down at the 1 when he was flipped head-first by Tedric Thompson.

Prescott, who also had an 11-yard scoring pass to Michael Gallup in the first half, scored on the next play in the eighth win in nine games for the Cowboys.

"He's just a rare guy," coach Jason Garrett said. "His leadership, his toughness, just his way, his spirit. It's like none other. Somehow, some way, he's going to figure this thing out for us."

Dallas' defense, ranked in the top 10 most of the season, stifled the NFL's No. 1 rushing offense and mostly kept quarterback Russell Wilson under control and handed him his first loss in four wild-card games.

The Seahawks had finished the regular season with six wins in seven games to secure Wilson's sixth playoff trip in seven years despite a roster overhaul and 0-2 start.

"This has been a special, special year," Wilson said. "Just the growth of our team, the men in the locker room, just the way that we've played together, just eliminating the doubters and the things that people thought that we could only do."

Prescott, the NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year in 2016 when the Cowboys lost to Green Bay at home as the top seed in the NFC, threw for 226 yards, and his sneak for what appeared to be a clinching score because Dallas burned more than five minutes while taking 24-14 lead.

But Tyler Lockett's 53-yard catch set up a quick Seattle touchdown—Wilson's 7-yard scoring pass to J.D. McKissic. The Seahawks got within two on their second 2-point conversion following an injury to Sebastian Janikowski.

The missing kicker left the Seahawks no good options on an onside kick with 1:18 remaining. Punter Michael Dickson's drop kick was caught by Cole Beasley at the Dallas 31, sealing the first playoff win for the Cowboys since beating Detroit in the wild-card round in the 2014 season.

After Wilson ran for 4 yards for a touchdown and Mike Davis' 2-point conversion run put Seattle up 14-10 late in the third quarter, Prescott led a 67-yard drive to put the Cowboys back in front for good.

Luck has 2 TDs to lead Colts vs Texans

In Houston, a year ago at this time Andrew Luck was at home struggling with an injured shoulder that cost him the entire season.

On Saturday he wrote a happy ending to the latest chapter of his comeback season, throwing for 222 yards and two touchdowns and the Indianapolis Colts raced out to a big lead and cruised to a 21-7 win over the Houston Texans in the wild-card game.

Luck put on a show in his hometown in a stadium where he'd attended games throughout childhood and played in them since high school, throwing for 191 yards and two touchdowns before halftime to help the Colts (11-6) build a 21-0 lead.

He denied feeling "at home" at NRG Stadium, but admitted to having warm feelings for the city he grew up in and where his grandparents and many friends still reside.

"But it's still an away stadium," he said. "It was very loud, very energetic, but fun to win, certainly."

Running back Marlon Mack had 148 yards and a touchdown for Indianapolis, which advances to face the top-seeded Kansas City Chiefs in the divisional round next weekend.

"We know we have an elite quarterback and we can throw it for 400 and win when we have to," Indianapolis coach Frank Reich said.

"But the margin for error in playoff football when you try to do it that way is very thin. When you can win like this—running the football and stopping it—that's just everything."

Houston (11-6), which overcame a 0-3 start to win the AFC South, gave up too many big plays and couldn't get anything going on offense in the first half to fall into the huge hole.

Deshaun Watson, who was sacked an NFL-leading 62 times in the regular season, was sacked three times and hit eight more times in a disappointing playoff debut. He finished with 235 yards passing with a touchdown and an interception.

"Just a lack of execution on our part," Watson said. "We didn't make plays. I didn't make plays. Communication was a little off. You just got to give the Colts the credit."

The Colts, who opened the season 1-5, continued an impressive run by winning their fifth straight and for the 10th time in 11 games. Saturday was their first playoff appearance since the AFC championship game loss at New England in the "Deflategate" game in the 2014 season.

After big jump, Bears look to KO Eagles

LAKE FOREST, Ill. (AP)—Not long after he was hired, Matt Nagy watched the Super Bowl with his wife at a bar near the Chicago Bears' practice facility. His good friend Doug Pederson was coaching the Philadelphia Eagles to their first Super Bowl championship.

The place was just about empty. He even had to ask for the game to be turned on.

"It was awesome," he recalled.

Nagy hopes things don't go so well for his pal when the NFC North champion Bears host the Eagles on Sunday in a wild-card game packed with storylines.

Chicago (12-4) is in the playoffs for the first time since the 2010 team won the division, making a huge jump in Nagy's first season after four straight last-place finishes. The Bears are on a 9-1 tear; the Eagles (9-7) have won five of six.

Chicago quarterback Mitchell Trubisky will make his first playoff appearance.

Eagles quarterback Nick Foles—last year's Super Bowl MVP—will try to deliver another standout performance while filling in for Carson Wentz. He's 6-0 in those situations the past two seasons.

Foles was particularly good the past three games with Wentz sidelined by a back injury. He tied Philip Rivers' NFL record in last week's win over Washington by completing 25 consecutive passes. He will start this one after leaving with a chest injury against the Redskins.

Alshon Jeffery will play in Chicago for the first time since the star receiver left the Bears after five seasons to sign with Philadelphia in 2017. Chicago's Trey Burton is questionable with a groin injury, but if he plays, he'll try to beat the Eagles this time around after throwing a touchdown to Foles on a trick play—"Philly Special"— in the Super Bowl victory over New England.

There will be Long brothers—Chicago guard Kyle and Philadelphia defensive end Chris—on opposing teams.

And there will be two coaches on opposite sidelines with a strong bond formed while working under Andy Reid in Philadelphia and Kansas City.

"I told him at the owners meeting this past offseason, he got that Super Bowl, right. I'm trying to follow his lead here," Nagy said. "He probably doesn't want to hear that right now, but I want to stick on that path. Ton of respect for him."

The feeling is mutual.

"Right away, you (could) tell that he was going to work himself up the ranks," Pederson said.

The Eagles have relied on backups and reserves after losing three-fourths of their starting secondary to season-ending injuries. Second-year pro Rasul Douglas and rookie Avonte Maddox have stepped up at cornerback since starters Ronald Darby and Jalen Mills went down. Veteran Corey Graham replaced safety Rodney McLeod. Maddox even played safety when Graham was out. Second-year pro Tre Sullivan also has filled in at safety and former Bears defensive back Cre'Von LeBlanc has played nickel cornerback with Sidney Jones out of the lineup. The group has improved significantly the past month.

Warriors, Kings combine for record 41 treys

SACRAMENTO (AP)—Not much time passes in the NBA these days between broken 3-point records. Another mark fell Saturday night.

The Golden State Warriors and Sacramento Kings put on a shooting bonanza and set a single-game record with 41 combined 3-pointers. Steph Curry hit 10 on his way to a game-high 42 points in the Warriors' 127-123 win.

Golden State shot 21-of-47 from long range, while Sacramento went 20-of-36. It marked the first game in NBA history in which both teams made at least 20 3s. The teams passed the previous mark of 40 3-pointers, set by the Cleveland Cavaliers (21) and Minnesota Timberwolves (19) last February.

Kevin Durant, Klay Thompson and Quinn Cook each added three 3-pointers for the Warriors, while Draymond Green and Andre Iguodala each made one.

Buddy Hield led the Kings with a career-high eight 3s. Justin Jackson made five, Bogdan Bogdanovic had three and Nemanja Bjelica added two. Ben McLemore and Yogi Ferrell each hit one.

Curry hit five 3s and scored 20 points in the fourth quarter to help the Warriors recover after squandering double-digit leads in the second and third.

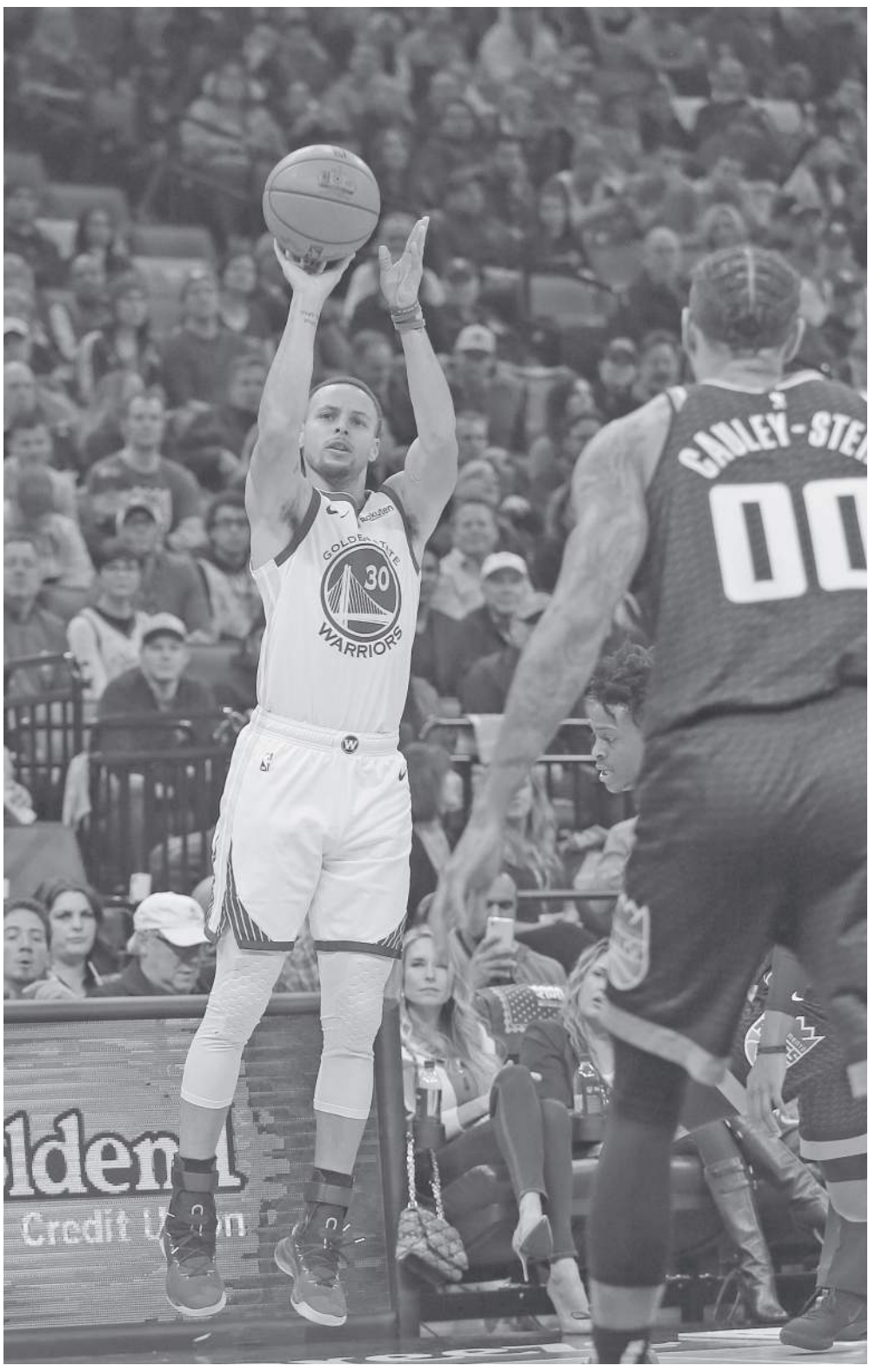
Golden State led by 14 after the first quarter, only to see Sacramento rally to within 70-69 at the break. The Warriors pushed the lead back to 10 early in the third, but the Kings came back again, finishing the quarter strong to go ahead 103-96 heading into the final frame.

The Warriors regained control in the fourth behind Curry. He converted a pair of key 3-point plays the old-fashioned way down the stretch, then sealed the win with two free throws with 9.4 seconds left.

76ers 106, Mavericks 100

In Philadelphia, Joel Embiid and Ben Simmons carried the load without Jimmy Butler. And when Butler returns, the 76ers stars expect Philadelphia to keep rolling.

Embiid had 25 points and 12 rebounds, and Simmons added 20 points, 14 rebounds and 11 assists in Philadelphia's victory over the Dallas Mavericks.



AP

Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry, left, shoots a triple as Sacramento Kings center Willie Cauley-Stein, right, looks on during the first quarter of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, Jan. 5, 2019, in Sacramento, Calif. The Warriors won 127-123.

Embiid hit two key free throws late for Philadelphia, which was without Butler for the second straight game due to an upper respiratory infection. The four-time All-Star wasn't around to address a published report that said he recently challenged coach Brett Brown in a disrespectful way about his role in the offense.

Brown downplayed the incident before the game, and both Embiid and Simmons expressed the belief afterward that the three stars can coexist.

"Everybody is trying to fit in," Embiid said. "We are going to keep working on it. We are inching toward it, and we are going to get there."

Simmons added: "Jimmy's been great, amazing for me."

JJ Redick added 20 points for Philadelphia, which improved to 17-3 at home while winning its fourth in the last five.

Wesley Matthews had 18 points to pace short-handed Dallas, which fell to 3-18 on the road. The Mavericks were without Dirk Nowitzki (rest), Devin Harris (back) and J.J. Barea (ankle).

Spurs 108, Grizzlies 88

In San Antonio, the Spurs could have been excused for a letdown two days after their most emotional victory of the season. Then again, San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich gives no quarter and neither did his team.

Derrick White scored 19 points, LaMarcus Aldridge added 18 and the Spurs overcame a sluggish start to beat Memphis, handing the Grizzlies their fifth straight loss.

Popovich only offered a dismissive look when asked if he was worried about a letdown following the Spurs' 125-107 victory in Kawhi Leonard's return to San Antonio on Thursday. The frenzied environment that overwhelmed the Raptors was absent, but the Spurs energized themselves and the crowd.

"Definitely a different atmosphere," White said. "We just had to bring it within the locker room. I think we kind of got off to a slow start, but we picked it up there and got the win."

San Antonio won for the 12th time in 15 games and is 4 1/2 games out of first in the Western Conference after dropping to 14th in December.

Raptors 123, Bucks 116

In Milwaukee, Kawhi Leonard and Pascal Siakam each scored 30 points, with Siakam setting a career high, and the Toronto Raptors beat the Milwaukee Bucks in a matchup of the top two teams in the NBA standings.

Serge Ibaka added 25 points and nine rebounds, Fred VanVleet had 21 points, and Danny Green 12 points and nine rebounds. The Raptors slowly took charge in the second and third quarters and withstood the Bucks' comeback attempt in the fourth.

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 43 points and 18 rebounds for Milwaukee. Malcolm Brogdon added 15 points, and Khris Middleton and Eric Bledsoe each had 14. The Bucks had won five straight.

Milwaukee was coming off a 144-112 victory over Atlanta on Friday night, while Toronto had a day to rest following a 125-107 loss to the Spurs on Thursday night in Leonard's return to San Antonio.

The Raptors put it away with a 15-2 run, taking a 110-98 lead on Siakam's wide-open 3 from the corner with 5:14 to play

Nuggets 123, Hornets 110

In Denver, Nikola Jokic scored a season-high 39 points and grabbed 12 rebounds, reserve Paul Millsap added 18 and the Western Conference-leading Denver Nuggets knocked off the Charlotte Hornets for their 10th straight home victory.

At 26-11, the Nuggets are off to their best NBA start in franchise history. This also marks the latest they've been in first place in the conference since March 16, 1977.

Jokic also had six assists, three steals and one blocked shot. He was 16 of 29 from the floor and 4 of 5 from the line. Kemba Walker had 20 points for the Hornets in the first game of a six-game.

Jazz 110, Pistons 105

In Detroit, Donovan Mitchell scored 24 of his 26 points in the second half, and Utah rallied from an 18-point, second-quarter deficit to beat Detroit.

The Jazz nearly squandered an 11-point lead of their own in the final quarter, allowing the Pistons to cut the lead to one on a 3-pointer by Blake Griffin. Ricky Rubio made two free throws for Utah with 12.3 seconds remaining, and Detroit turned the ball over on its next possession.

Griffin scored 34 points for the Pistons.

Pelicans 133, Cavaliers 98

In Cleveland, Jrue Holiday and Julius Randle both scored 22 points and New Orleans handed Cleveland its ninth straight loss.

The defeat came a night after Cavaliers coach Larry Drew and his players held a lengthy meeting following a 26-point loss to Utah. Cleveland is an NBA-worst 8-32.

Anthony Davis had 20 points and 10 rebounds for New Orleans. Jordan Clarkson led Cleveland with 23 points.

LeBron's return from injury delayed

CALIFORNIA—Los Angeles Lakers superstar LeBron James will miss at least another week as he continues to receive treatment on his strained left groin.

He will be re-evaluated in one week, the team said in a news release. James missed Friday's home game against the New York Knicks and will also not play in road games at Minnesota on Sunday and at Dallas on Monday (he will not travel with the team on that road trip) and a home game against Detroit on Wednesday.

Playing at Utah on Jan. 11 or at home against Cleveland on Jan. 13 would be the next games for James' potential return to the lineup for the 21-17 Lakers, who are 1-3 since James sustained the injury against Golden State on Christmas.

James, 34, has been remarkably healthy throughout his career. It's an attribute almost as impressive as his strength, quickness, scoring, passing and basketball IQ. In 15-plus seasons, he has played in 94% of possible games and has never missed a playoff game. Last season, he played in all 82 games for the first time in his career.

He has been bothered by minor injuries from time to time and a bad back sidelined him for two weeks in 2014-15. Since then, James has not missed consecutive games with an injury until now.

James' injury is costing the Lakers in the standings. With him, the Lakers were 20-15 and in fourth place in the Western Conference, 2½ games out of first place.

Headed into Friday's game, they are in eighth place and five games behind first-place Denver in the ultra-competitive and deep West. The Sacramento Kings are two games behind the Lakers, and the Memphis Grizzlies and Mavericks are 2½ games behind Los Angeles, which is also just a game behind the fifth-place Portland Trail Blazers.

The Lakers said James was day-to-day when they announced the results of the MRI on Dec. 26. There was some expectation that he would miss a few games. At the same time, James does not want to rush back and turn the groin injury into a lingering problem.

"We got to get him healthy," Lakers coach Luke Walton told reporters on Friday. "We talk all year. We need everyone on our team. You don't want anyone to get hurt. That's how the NBA season plays out. We're down in bodies. It's going to be a challenge, but our guys should be excited for that.

White Sox make offer to Machado, still eye Harper

CHICAGO— Maybe, just maybe, Bryce Harper won't get a dime more than the contract he turned down three-and-a-half months ago from the Washington Nationals.

Perhaps that $300 million won't be deposited into Manny Machado's bank account, either. Here we are, only six weeks before the start of spring training, and neither is remotely close to signing.

However, the Chicago White Sox, who along with the Philadelphia Phillies are the only teams to publicly express interest in both players, have formally offered Machado a long-term contract proposal, four persons with direct knowledge of the offer said. They spoke only on the condition of anonymity since they are in the middle of negotiations.

It's characterized as a serious offer, likely closer to $200 million than $300 million, but not enough to sway Machado to board a flight from Miami to Chicago for a press conference.

The White Sox have yet to make a formal offer for Harper but remain in constant contact, meeting six weeks ago in person with Harper, his wife and agent Scott Boras.

If Machado had his wish, and the offers were relatively close, friends believe he'd choose the New York Yankees, his favorite team growing up. Yet if the Yankees were convinced that Machado was coming their way, they wouldn't have even bothered with shortstop Troy Tulowitzki, signing him to a no-risk insurance policy at the major-league minimum of $550,000, but informing Machado beforehand of their plans.

If Harper had his choice, with the offers being close, friends believe he'd pick the Los Angeles Dodgers. The Dodgers may have interest, but haven't publicly declared they will even make a short-term offer.

If it's solely about the money with Harper and Machado, it may be between the Phillies and White Sox, with the Phillies prepared to spend "stupid" money, in the words of owner John Middleton.

While nothing has yet transpired, at least the landscape is starting to become clear.

The White Sox have expressed serious interest in both, meeting with Harper in Las Vegas and Machado in Chicago. The Phillies hosted Machado before Christmas and are now working to schedule a meeting in Las Vegas with Harper, Phillies GM Matt Klentak said Thursday.

"Manny and his group were great," Klentak said. "It was an opportunity for us to talk to Manny about our organization and have him meet a lot of people, and also a chance for him to ask us questions and learn a little more about us.

"I expect the dialogue there will continue."

Optimistic?

"Hard to say," Klentak said. "These things take a lot of twists and turns."

The Phillies' biggest challenge with Harper may be convincing him that while Philadelphia may be one of the toughest baseball markets to play in, he could still be embraced and beloved by fans after spending his career with the rival Nationals.

Really, the X-factor in all of the Harper talks may be the Nationals. They offered a 10-year, $300 million contract on Sept. 26 that included deferred payments that devalue the total to about $284 million or less.

Nationals owner Mark Lerner said that offer is no longer on the table, but it certainly didn't stop the Nationals from spending five hours with Harper and Boras on Dec. 22, according to The Washington Post.

So unless the Dodgers are playing it awfully coy, or the Chicago Cubs find a taker for Jason Heyward or Yu Darvish, there are only three teams involved in the bidding, or four, if the Nationals jump back in the mix for Harper.

That's it. Three teams in; at least 26 are out.

When free agency began, it seemed preordained that Harper would wind up with the Phillies and Machado with the Yankees. Now here we are, and precious little has changed.

Who knows—maybe the White Sox could become more attractive each day, the Dodgers could feel an urge to add star power or the Phillies could act really crazy by signing both.

All we really know is that this wait could be a doozy. Maybe even into spring training.

"I wouldn't even venture a guess," Klentak said. "I'm not smart enough to predict what will drive markets."

Money will do a whole lot of talking, but until it reaches historic proportions, the wait goes on.

AP

The combo photo shows Washington Nationals' Bryce Harper, left, and the Los Angeles Dodgers' Manny Machado in last season's Major League Baseball. With only six weeks before the start of spring training, neither is remotely close to signing with any team.

Britton, Yankees agree to $39M, 3-year contract

In New York, Zach Britton is staying with the New York Yankees, agreeing to a $39 million, three-year contract, a deal that could be worth $53 million over four seasons.

Britton gets $13 million in each of the next three seasons. The Yankees have a $14 million option for 2022 and must decide on it after the 2020 season. If they decline the option, Britton can opt out of the deal following the 2020 season and become a free agent again.

Woodland breaks tie with McIlroy to stay in front at Kapalua

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP) One day, Gary Woodland pulled away with five straight birdies. The next day, all it took was one big putt.

The challenge now is to finish off the Sentry Tournament of Champions.

Woodland broke a tie with Rory McIlroy by making a 65-foot eagle putt on 15th hole, and he closed with one last birdie Saturday for a 5-under 68 that gave him a three-shot lead going into the final round at Kapalua.

Woodland has never won on the PGA Tour in the six previous times he had the 54-hole lead in stroke play. In his favor is the history at Kapalua. While the Plantation course lends itself to wild swings in scoring, no one has ever lost a three-shot lead after 54 holes since the winners-only tournament moved here in 1999.

"The difference is I'm a completely different player than I have been in the past," Woodland said. "I've obviously been in the position multiple times. It's nice to build off those and take certain things out of them. ... I'm playing well enough where I don't have to play conservative. I can attack and continue to trust what I'm doing and should be good."

McIlroy played bogey-free for a 68 after he had to settle for pars on the two par 5s at the end. Still, he starts the new year playing in the final group, having not played a tournament in nearly two months.

"Another final group is great, especially coming off the back of not being able to play as well as I would have liked in final groups last year," McIlroy said. "So to get myself right back in contention and see if I've learned anything from last year and try to put that into practice is great."

Woodland was at 17-under 202, and would love nothing better than to secure another trip to Kapalua in the first tournament of the year.

Marc Leishman, who made a double bogey in the opening round and a triple bogey on Friday, limited the damage to only one bogey. He had a 68 and was well in range, four shots behind.

Xander Schauffele (68) and Bryson DeChambeau (70) were five back.

The only downer for Woodland was learning that his grandmother in Kansas had died Friday night. This is a family vacation for most of the Woodland crew — for Christmas, he flew out 11 relatives.

"She's been downhill for a little while now," Woodland said. "It's been tough. And you try to prepare for that, but you never really can. Definitely will have a little extra emotion with me, but we'll get through it."

It was a tough day of work on the course, as the trade wind returned stronger than expected.

McIlroy managed to get through it without a bogey. He had a close call on the 16th, when he tried to atone for the missed birdie on the previous hole by going at the flag and landing just over the green. He faced one of the fastest chips on the course, down the slope toward the Pacific horizon, and left it 12 short. He made his par to at least stay in range.

McIlroy spoke earlier in the week about playing in the last group six times last year. One of those was the Masters, the missing leg of the career Grand Slam, when he started two shots behind Patrick Reed and never challenged. Another was the Tour Championship, where he was three behind Tiger Woods and didn't give him much of a fight.

"I probably pushed a little too hard, and it didn't really work out for me," McIlroy said. "I just have to go about my business. I didn't make a bogey today, so I'll make that a goal tomorrow."

It still will depend on Woodland, a three-time winner on the PGA Tour who wants more victories to show for his improved all-around game. His only mistake on Saturday was coming up just short of the green on No. 12 and missing a 5-foot par putt.

He made up for that with his eagle putt, laughing when it dropped, though he said it had nothing to do with surprise.

"I just saw somebody's face in the background. They weren't too happy that the ball went in, so it made me laugh," he said. "I enjoyed that."

The last two winners at Kapalua, Dustin Johnson and Justin Thomas, needed something special Sunday. Thomas shot a 70 and was seven behind, while Johnson had 69 and was eight back.

26 selected for US women January camp

CHICAGO (AP)—U.S. women's national team coach Jill Ellis has named a 26-player roster for the team's January camp in Europe.

The team leaves for Portugal on Saturday and will play a pair of exhibition matches against France and Spain later in the month as it prepares for the World Cup in France this summer.

Tierna Davidson, Kelley O'Hara and McCall Zerboni have returned to the team following injuries. Davidson broke her ankle in September while playing for Stanford. Zerboni fractured her elbow in a match for the U.S. team against Chile, and O'Hara is coming off ankle surgery.

Ellis included four goalkeepers in the camp: Ashlyn Harris and Alyssa Naeher are joined by Jane Campbell and Adrianna Franch. Campbell, returning after her last call-up in April, has three appearances with the team while Franch is still looking for her first cap.

Also included was defender Emily Fox, coming off her sophomore season at North Carolina. She made her first two appearances with the United States in November.

Meanwhile, facing increasing criticism by government members over the decision to play the Italian Super Cup in Saudi Arabia, Serie A's president is hailing the match as a "historic" opportunity for Saudi women to attend an international soccer game.

After tickets for the Jan. 16 game between Juventus and AC Milan went on sale with specified sectors for "singles" and "families" to separate men and women, Interior Minister Matteo Salvini said it was "a shame" for the game to be played in a country where women can't go to the stadium unless they are accompanied by men.

"I won't watch that match," added Salvini, an outspoken Milan fan who recently criticized the choices of coach Gennaro Gattuso. "Soccer is a slave to business and television."

Numerous other Italian politicians also expressed outrage.

Serie A president Gaetano Micciche responded by pointing out that women can go to the match unaccompanied by men.

"Our Super Cup will go down in history as the first official international competition that Saudi women can attend," Micciche said Thursday in a long statement.

Women were allowed into Saudi sports stadiums a year ago for the first time to watch soccer matches, although they were segregated in the stands, sticking to the "family section" away from all-male crowds elsewhere.

Tickets for the game at the King Abdullah Sports City Stadium in Jeddah sold out in less than two days—with the first 50,000 tickets sold in a span of four hours.

There had already been calls for the match to be moved after the killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi.

MICRO

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athletics group is next on the list with its 13 medals (two golds, five silvers, and six bronzes). Zarinae Sapong and Rachel Abrams were the gold medalists for the CNMI Athletes Team.

Swimming will also get cash incentives after taking home one gold, courtesy of Kento Akimaru, and four silver medals, while the Northern Marianas Paddle Sports Federation will be rewarded for its one silver (men's team) and one bronze (women's squad). Baseball will get $100 for making it to the finals against Pohnpei and settling for a silver medal.

Meanwhile, NMSA announced that the 2021 Pacific Mini Games Oversight Committee will meet this week to discuss its budget presentation. Once finalized, the report/presentation will be shown to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres for review and consideration.

NMSA is confident that the Torres administration and the CNMI Legislature will back up Saipan's hosting of the Mini Games two years from now.

TAN

From Page 28

10 out of the more than 100 runners. She is the first CNMI runner to earn an All-Island Team honors in the annual event and helped the squad to a Top 3 finish in the team competition.

Meanwhile, completing NMSA's monthly awardees were the CNMI U18 Girls Athletics Team (Team of the Month for October), Eleina Santos (Female Athlete of the Month for November), Chris Aninzo (Male Athlete of the Month for December), Nelson Batallones (Male Student Athlete of the Month for December), and Agape Christian School A (Team of the Month for December).

Agape A, which was made of Willian Chen, Kobe Yang, Peter Wang, Jonathan Xiong, and Arthur Liang, was the overall finisher in last month's 37th Annual Christmas Island Relay, extending the school's reign in the race. Aninzo is with the York St. John University in the United Kingdom and a member of its soccer program, while Santos was the women's open winner in the Turkey Trot Run. Batallones swam in the 14th FINA World Championships in China and earned personal best times in the 50m and 100m butterfly races.

The CNMI U18 Girls Athletics Team, on the other hand, had a podium finish (out of 12 schools) in the Asia Pacific Invitational. The Tan-led squad, which also had SIS' Stella McCallion, Anika Snyder, and Malika Miyawaki and Marianas High School's Therize Millare and Jerlyn Castillo Guam as members, was the fastest Micronesian team and-placed ahead of Palau. Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, and the Philippines.

20+++

From Page 28

the19 triumph over Logan and his teammates with Tragic. However, the Squirrels were frustrated by Just Do It in the battle for the last finals berth and the Peterke-led squad earned a second crack at 20+++.

The Just Do It-20+++ Part 2 had the same results, as fatigue took its toll on the former, allowing the eventual champions to cruise to victory early and not lose its twice-to-beat advantage.

Meanwhile, last Saturday's first competition under the sanction of Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association and organized by the Mt. Carmel School Alumni was a fundraiser with proceeds going to MCS, which sustained massive damage from Super Typhoon Yutu.

The tournament drew 15 teams, including Kingkos, KKSP, Wakanda, Dr. Pepper, and New Year.

Honorable Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and
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Special Performances
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- Parker
- Uprooted

All proceeds raised will go towards Yutu Relief Efforts
Nonprofit booths distributing supplies
Attendees must bring their own beach chairs
FREE ENTRANCE!

Warriors, Kings combine for record 41 treys

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

KAN PACIFIC POOL CLOSED

20+++ tops grass v-ball tourney

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Husband and wife Jacoby and Cathy Winkfield, Alfredo Guevarra, and Bryan Chlarson of 20+++ ruled the 2019 Kickoff Reverse Co-Ed Grass Volleyball Tournament held last Saturday at the Navy Hill Field.

20+++ was undefeated in the playoffs, capping its perfect run in the double elimination contest with a 21-9 victory over Just Do It in Game 1 of the finals. Just Do It, which had Laurie Peterka, T.J. Eina, Keystone Norech, and Denise as players, and 20+++ made it to the winner's bracket semifinals with the latter prevailing, 21-18, to march into the title match first.

Earlier, the quartet of Jacoby, Cathy, Guevarra, and Chlarson also beat Kokonutz, Sexy Setters, and Squirrels to march into the semis of the winner's bracket. Just Do It, on the other hand, edged Team Agape, The Better Ream, and We Showed Up to move a win away from earning a finals seat.

We Showed Up and Tragic, after falling to the loser's bracket, faced off with the latter remaining in contention after a 21-16 victory. Gillian Villagomez, Eun Syu Hahn, Jericho Castro, and Logan Mister suited up for Tragic and the win over We Showed Up allowed Logan to meet the other members of his family—the Squirrel's Tyce, Blake, Angie, and Dylan—in another make-or-break game.

The Squirrels kept their finals hopes alive after surviving Seiko in the loser's bracket and stayed in the finals race following a 21-

See 20+++ on Page 27

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Alfredo Guevarra of 20+++ tries to keep the ball in play during their title game against Just Do It in the 2019 Kickoff Reverse Co-Ed Grass Volleyball Tournament held last Saturday at the Navy Hill Field.

Back-to-back for Santos, Tan

SANTOS

TAN

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Athletics' Tania Tan and Tyler Santos earned back-to-back monthly awards after their outstanding performance in local races.

ATHLETES of the MONTH

Santos and Tan were named NMSA/Tan Siu Lin Foundation Male and Female Student Athletes of the Month for October and November to lead a host of monthly awardees Northern Marianas Sports Association recognized last Thursday during its meeting. NMSA selected the awardees for October to December in last week's meeting, as it failed to convene in the last two months of 2018 due to Super Typhoon Yutu.

The two runners were the first place finishers in their respective age groups in the 2018 Northern Marianas Athletics/Public School System All Schools Cross Country Championships held last October and also got the top honors in the U18 division of the 34th Annual Mt. Tapochao Turkey Trot Run that took place in November. Tan, of Saipan International School, won three of the four cross country races (she was off-island in the first event), while Santos, of Tinian High School, prevailed in the last two and came to Saipan just a few hours before the Turkey Trot.

Both Santos and Tan also suited up for Team Marianas that competed in the 2018 Asia Pacific Invitational Cross Country Championships with the latter making it to the Top

See TAN on Page 27

Micro Games medalists to receive cash incentives

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas Sports Association has approved the proposal to award cash incentives to medalists in the 2018 Micronesian Games in Yap.

During their monthly meeting last Thursday at the office of Delegate Gregorio "Kilili" C. Sablan (Ind-MP) in Susupe, NMSA president Michael White announced that he had already signed the check that will be distributed to the medalists at the NMSA Annual Sports Banquet on Feb. 20 at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan. Gold medalists will receive $150, while $100 and $75 will be handed to the silver and bronze winners, respectively. For medalists in team events, the check will be given to their respective sports federations and it is up to the latter how they will award the cash incentives.

Weightlifting will get the most incentives, as it delivered 15 medals, including six golds, for the CNMI. Angel San Nicolas, Antoinette Labausa, Rodrigo Ada, Bonnie Cruz, and Joey Tudela were the members of the CNMI Weightlifting Team.

The Commonwealth's

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Antoinette Labausa competes in the weightlifting event in the 2018 Micronesian Games in Yap.